

LIMA (R) — Congresswoman Patricia Diaz, who is a member of the Peruvian Congress, visited a brothel in Lima on Friday to support the controversial family programme. Mr. Diaz, who is a member of the Peruvian Congress, visited a brothel in Lima on Friday to support the controversial family programme. Mr. Diaz, who is a member of the Peruvian Congress, visited a brothel in Lima on Friday to support the controversial family programme.

World's 1st
'gene shop' to
open in
Manchester

LONDON (AFP) — The world's first "gene shop" offering advice and information on a variety of disorders, is to open in Manchester next year. The shop, which is to be run by a team of scientists and geneticists, will offer advice and information on a variety of disorders, including cystic fibrosis, sickle cell, and other genetic diseases.

Women plan
to sue over birth
control implant

LONDON (AFP) — Women who claim they suffered serious side-effects from a revolutionary birth control implant are planning to sue the manufacturer. The women, who are from various parts of the world, claim that the implant caused them to suffer from serious health problems, including skin rashes, hair loss, and menstrual problems.

Rabin: No use probing war crimes

TEL AVIV (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin rejected calls Sunday by cabinet ministers to investigate allegations of Israeli war crimes against Egyptian prisoners of war (PoWs), saying both sides were guilty of transgressions. "I am not saying there were no aberrations," Mr. Rabin was quoted by the Israeli news agency Ilim as telling ministers. "There were aberrations on both sides. There is no purpose in raising events of the past, not on our side and not on theirs. I think that raising the issue embourges the Arab side as well." Reeling from two weeks of claims that Israeli soldiers killed prisoners and civilians in at least three Mideast wars (see page 2), ministers argued Sunday about how best to handle the situation. Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni called on Mr. Rabin to come clean on Israeli war crimes. "We must deal with this," Mr. Aloni said, speaking on Israel Radio. "The government and then the education system... must say their piece so it will not end up that on the outside we are moral, better than the non-Jews, but then we sweep things under the carpet."

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Iraq planned to invade Kuwait, S. Arabia this month — defector Jordan had no prior knowledge of defection, was surprised by it, Hussein Kamel affirms

By Jamal Halaby
The Associated Press

AMMAN — A top-ranking Iraqi defector said Sunday his defection had foiled plans by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to invade Kuwait and Saudi Arabia this month. "The latest movement of a large number of troops towards Basra was aimed at entering Kuwait. All army units were informed to enter Kuwait and the eastern parts of Saudi Arabia," said Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel Al Majid, President Saddam's son-in-law. "The move was reversed after... our departure," Gen. Hassan told the Associated Press in an interview, his first public comment since a press conference in Amman on Aug. 12.

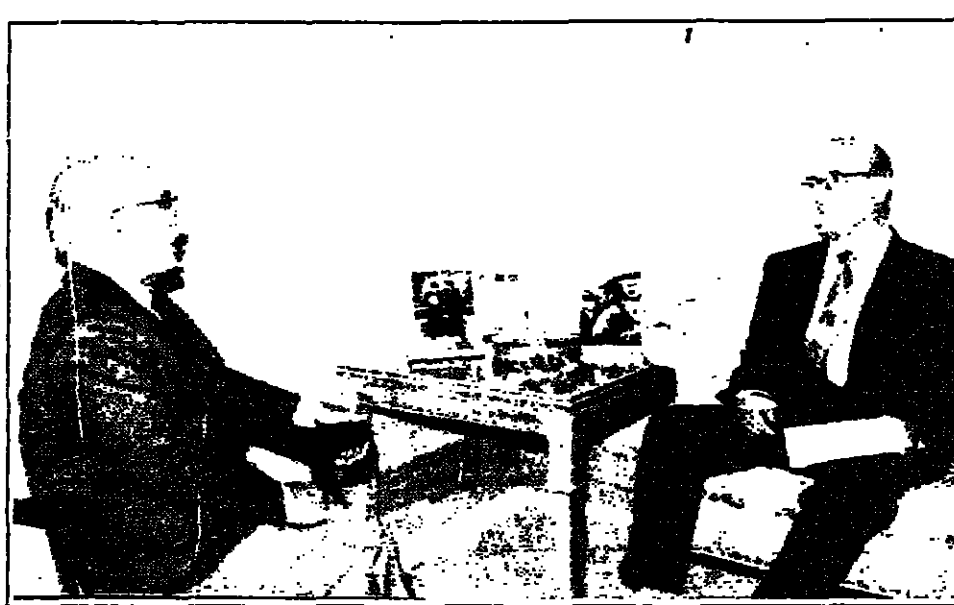
Gen. Hassan said that before his defection, the Iraqi cabinet and the Revolutionary Command Council discussed the invasion plans in meetings that he attended. "If the regime is honest, it should not lie about this," he said. "All (top) members of the Iraqi Baath Party were aware of the plans." Gen. Hassan, Iraq's industry minister and head of the country's clandestine weapons programme, was granted asylum in Jordan after his Aug. 8 defection along with his brother Saddam Kamel, their wives, both daughters of President Saddam Hussein, a cousin and about 15 soldiers.

His revelation appeared to confirm U.S. reports of "unusual" Iraqi troop movements. The U.S. has reinforced its military presence in the Gulf to thwart potential Iraqi threat to Kuwait and Jordan. Gen. Hassan, who is in his early 40s, said he defected because he "could not continue to tolerate the oppression of the Iraqi people and the savagery of the regime." He described Uday, President Saddam's eldest son, as "crazy and whimsical, trying to impose his authority and wickedness on society and government ministries." "His father is aware of that," Gen. Hassan said.

The defector revealed that Ali Hassan Al Majid, his uncle and an adviser to President Saddam, had met him "last week" and "warned me against speaking out against and antagonising the regime." Uday and Ali Hassan rushed to Amman on Aug. 10 after Jordan announced it was granting asylum to the Iraqi defectors. King Hussein, who met with Uday and Ali Hassan, refused to hand over the defectors to Iraq. Gen. Hassan said the King had no prior knowledge of the defection. "It took them by surprise," he said of the Jordanians. "I was not in any contact with any side, whether Arab, international, American or otherwise before I left Iraq."

"I entered Jordan with no prior notice," he said. "I met with His Majesty and told him that I wanted to stay in Jordan under his protection." The former brains behind Iraq's secret weapons programme said he did not expect to have anything new to reveal about Iraq's clandestine arms if he meets with U.N. envoy Rolf Ekeus, who is widely expected to travel to Jordan. Mr. Ekeus said in Baghdad on Sunday that Iraq had given him "important" information related to its biological weapons programme.

(Continued on page 7)



His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday receives Lebanese Agricultural Minister Shawqi Fakhouri (Petra photo)

King meets Lebanese envoy, Sabbah and U.S. admiral

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday received a message from Lebanese President Elias Hrawi dealing with bilateral relations, and means of further enhancing them. The message was delivered to King Hussein by Lebanese Agriculture Minister Shawqi Fakhouri during an audience at the Royal Court. King Hussein voiced Jordan's support for Lebanon and its keen interest in enhancing bilateral relations in all fields. The audience was attended by Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem, Agriculture Minister Mansour Ben Tarif and the Lebanese ambassador to Jordan William Habib (see related story on page 3).

Also on Sunday King Hussein received in a separate audience Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem Michael Sabbah, who expressed his appreciation to King Hussein for his role in supporting the Palestinian people in their efforts to establish peace with Israel and to remove all obstacles facing the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks. Patriarch Sabbah said King Hussein's positions on Jerusalem had always received the admiration and appreciation of all Arabs, Palestinians and all peace-loving nations. "We support His Majesty's steps to achieve a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region and to ensure regional security and stability," Patriarch Sabbah said. The audience was attended by Mr. Qasem, and Bishop Salim Sayegh of the Catholic community in Jordan.

The King also received Admiral John Redd of the U.S. Marine Forces, who is currently on a visit to Jordan as part of the joint U.S.-Jordanian military exercises underway in the south. The audience was attended by Mr. Qasem, and the chief of the staff for land forces.

Gruesome murder reported in Salt

SALT (J.T.) — The mutilated body of a 30-year-old man identified as M.M.N. was found on Sunday in the Baq'e area in the outskirts of Salt. Informal sources attributed the crime to a dispute over a taxi-cab licence plate between the victim and the seller. The licence plate is a prerequisite for any taxi-cab to operate in Jordan. Further details were not immediately available.

Musa delays trip

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said on Sunday he was delaying a visit to Jordan because his Jordanian counterpart was unwell. Mr. Musa told journalists his trip, which had been scheduled for Monday, would go ahead a few days later than originally planned once Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabarti was fully recovered. He gave no further details. An official Jordanian source said on Saturday Mr. Musa had been expected to discuss the defection of senior Iraqi officials to Amman as well as the Middle East peace process.

Yemen postpones OIC meeting

ADEN (R) — Yemen on Saturday said a meeting of Islamic foreign ministers to discuss the plight of fellow Muslims in Bosnia had been postponed because of the lack of a quorum, the official SABA news agency reported. The agency quoted a Foreign Ministry official as saying 21 out of the 52 members of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) had responded favourably to attend the meeting which was scheduled to take place on Aug. 26.

Turkey asks S. Arabia to stop executions

RIYADH (R) — A Turkish envoy gave Saudi Arabia a message from President Suleyman Demirel on Sunday, urging Riyadh to stop the executions of 20 Turkish nationals convicted of drug trafficking, diplomats said. Neval Valintas, an envoy of Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller, handed the message for King Fahd to Crown Prince Abdullah Ben Abdul Aziz calling for the detained Turks to be freed, Turkish diplomats said. Earlier, Saudi Arabia said it had rejected a previous appeal from Mr. Demirel for the authorities to halt the beheadings of 20 Turks sentenced to death and accused Ankara of interfering in its internal affairs. The official Saudi newspaper Al Ryad said Sunday that "it is not possible to change the law of Islam, whatever the external pressure, the challenges or confrontation." (see related story on page 2).

Iraq revealed 'important' arms data, Ekeus reports

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq has handed over important data on its weapons programmes after what appears to be a "new turn" in relations with U.N. disarmament officials but more information is needed, a United Nations envoy said on Sunday.

"Iraq has given very important, significant new information with regard mostly to its biological weapons programmes and also some important information on its missile programme," Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. Special Commission in charge of dismantling Iraq under the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire, said before leaving for Bahrain.

Mr. Ekeus came to Baghdad on Thursday to collect arms data that Iraq had accused a high-level defector, a son-in-law of President Saddam Hussein, of concealing from U.N. inspectors. He said it seemed the Iraqi government had now taken "a new turn, appeared to open up, given new disclosures... at last we have come to a situation where Iraq voluntarily and actively provides the commission with information."

Mr. Ekeus said Iraq had addressed most of the outstanding issues in the biological sphere but stressed more information was required as he still did not regard the programme as closed. "Indeed, while we are now talking our specialists are still receiving information. It takes a long time because it is such a large amount of data," he said.

He said Iraq also gave "important clarifying information" on its nuclear programme. Experts from the international Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would take it back to Vienna for analysis. London's Observer newspaper reported Sunday Iraq was within three months of testing an atomic bomb when U.S.-led coalition forces launched the Gulf war to liberate Kuwait.

It quoted sources close to an American team responsible for debriefing President Saddam's son-in-law, Hussein Kamel Hassan Al Majid, who headed Iraq's weapons programme. He defected to Jordan Aug. 8 with his brother and their wives — both President Saddam's daughters.

"His sensational revelation that Iraq was within an ace of testing an atomic bomb — only postponed because of the Gulf war — is just one of the gifts he has presented the West," the Observer said in a story. Gen. Hassan also told the Americans that last October's Iraqi troop manoeuvres near the Kuwaiti border masked an Iraqi plot to invade Kuwait again, the paper quoted the sources as saying.

Arafat insists on complete agreement before signing it

CAIRO (AFP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat will only go to Washington to sign an accord with Israel when the two sides have reached a complete agreement on the next phase of Palestinian self-rule, he told a newspaper here Sunday. Mr. Arafat, who agreed a partial autonomy deal for the West Bank with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in the Egyptian port of Tabu on Aug. 11, said more differences had emerged between the two sides in the past few days.

He told the government daily Al Ahran Al Massai that differences over water-sharing and security for the town of Hebron, where 400 Israeli settlers live surrounded by 110,000 Palestinians, had raised doubts over whether a full deal could be signed on the White House lawn in September as planned. "So far, I haven't received an invitation to attend the signing ceremony of the accord. But if I receive one, I won't take any notice until we have settled the outstanding points with the Israeli side," he told the paper.

The Israeli cabinet meanwhile endorsed the transfer of more civilian powers to the Palestinians on the West Bank as part of the autonomy accords, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's spokeswoman said. The handover of responsibility for agriculture, insurance, labour, municipal affairs, postal services, petrol and gas, statistics, and trade and industry would now be signed with the PLO in the coming days, spokeswoman Aliza Goren said.

Israel wants a signing ceremony at the Red Sea resort of Eilat, where autonomy negotiations are continuing, while the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) favours Cairo, Ms. Goren said. It would take three or four weeks to complete the handover, she added. West Bank army administration chief Major General Oren Shohar told reporters the process would start during the coming week. The cabinet session chaired by Mr. Rabin unanimously endorsed a deal struck by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in Cairo on July 11 to cede control over the eight additional powers, Mr. Goren said. But control over more than 20 other areas is still under negotiations. Israeli and PLO negotiators were due to resume talks on the second phase of autonomy late Sunday in Eilat. The second phase, which is already 13 months behind schedule, includes the hand-

over of civilian powers in a total of 40 fields, an Israeli army redeployment outside Palestinian areas and elections to an autonomy council. One of the main obstacles to the spread of autonomy across the West Bank is the question of water resources, which are all under Israeli control. The PLO has demanded international arbitration of the issue in a bid to obtain a greater share of resources. Agriculture Minister Yaacov Tsuri, who is in charge of water in Israel, was to meet PLO economy minister Ahmad Ouriea in Eilat on Sunday in a fresh bid to settle the issue. Meanwhile, thousands of Palestinians left self-ruled Gaza for work in Israel on Sunday as the Jewish state lifted a 10-day closure of the strip, a Palestinian official said. Elsewhere in Gaza, a bomb went off near an Israeli patrol but no one was injured, the army said. Israel lifted the closure at 4 a.m. (10:00 GMT) two days after Palestinian police captured a militant from the Islamic Hamas group in Gaza suspected of planning a suicide bombing inside Israel. Wael Nassar and another Hamas militant gave themselves up at the end of a three-hour standoff with

Sharif Zeid, top Japanese official review relations and MENA summit

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Sunday discussed with the Director of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Department, Kensaku Hogen, preparations for the MENA economic summit, which will be held here in October. During a meeting held at his office in Parliament, Sharif Zeid discussed with Mr. Hogen economic relations and the possibility for Japan to support Jordan's foreign currency reserves, and finance development projects in the Kingdom. Sharif Zeid praised economic cooperation between Japan and Jordan. The Japanese official arrived here Friday on a four-day visit to Jordan as part of a tour in the region. The Japanese official leaves today (Monday) for Syria, the next leg of his tour in the region. Japanese officials say the Japanese private sector will have strong presence at the MENA summit. Murayama to visit Mideast, page 3.

AMMAN — Jordan and Israel on Sunday signed an agreement on cooperation in the energy sector, calling for joint studies in energy consumption, gas and oil exploration and sharing of expertise and technology. The agreement, signed at Aqaba by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Samih Darwazah and his Israeli counterpart Gonen Segov, also calls for cooperation in developing solar and wind energy as well as shale oil, which is present in abundance in both countries. The accord is the second agreement related to economy signed by Jordan and Israel since they signed a peace treaty on Oct. 26. The first, signed in May, was related to cooperation in tourism through joint tour packages and complementing each other's tourism potential. Jordan and Israel have also signed several other accords, but they mostly deal with border procedures and security arrangements. Agreements on trade and transport are two other key accords that remain to be signed by the two sides. Drafts of the accords has been finalised, but it was not immediately known when they will be signed. In addition to cooperation in sharing technology and expertise in energy-related areas, the agreement signed on Sunday also calls for feasibility studies for carrying gas and oil across the region. Israel and Qatar have been reported to be discussing pumping Qatari gas to the Israeli coast for use in Israel as well as possible export to the Mediterranean countries. If the project materialises

Jordan, Israel sign accord on cooperation in energy

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Jordan would be one of its key transit points. Another provision in the Jordanian-Israeli accord on energy is cooperation in conducting seismological studies in the Wadi Araba region and using shale rock to produce energy. Jordan is estimated to hold at least 40 billion tonnes of the rock, but the relatively low international prices of oil makes it commercially unfeasible to exploit the resource. However, Israel has developed a low-cost technology to produce energy from shale rock and that technology could help Jordan, energy experts say. The agreement also allows Jordanians to monitor radiation levels at Israel's Dimona reactor in the Naqab desert and satisfy Jordanian concerns since the reactor

lim enclave more than an hour apart, he said. Bosnian Serbs surrounded the government-held pocket in which about 65,000 Muslims are bottled up. After the U.S. diplomats are buried, the new American team will be formed to pursue what Washington has called a window of opportunity for settling the war in Bosnia and the overall crisis in former Yugoslavia. Rebuilding the American team, which lost three of its most experienced members, will be difficult. "We lost three-fifths of our negotiating team today," said Mr. Holbrooke in Sarajevo on Saturday. Helicopters ferried the flag-draped coffins and two injured Americans to the Croatian port of Split. The only members of the delegation to escape injury, Mr. Holbrooke and General Wes Clark, also left for home. They will fly to Ramstein air base in Germany before

Grieving U.S. peace mission pledges to return to Bosnia

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — The grieving members of an American peace mission left for home on Sunday escorting the bodies of three diplomats who died when their vehicle plunged off the perilous Mount Igman road into the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo. A British helicopter went down in the Adriatic Sea while on a training flight Sunday morning and four crew members were missing. U.N. spokesman Chris Gunness said. Rescuers picked up one crew member, he said. The Lynx helicopter was part of a rapid reaction force for Bosnia. It was flying near the U.N. base at Ploce, some 60 kilometres northwest of Dubrovnik on the Adriatic coast. Mr. Gunness said weather was bad when the helicopter went down at 10:25 a.m. (0825 GMT). President Bill Clinton meanwhile vowed the United States would pursue its efforts to end the bloodshed in Bosnia despite the deaths

of the three diplomats. "What they would want us to do is to press ahead, and that is what we intend to do," he said. A Russian Foreign Ministry official said Moscow remained optimistic peace could be achieved in former Yugoslavia this year and an international summit convened in October. But the American initiative to try to end four years of ethnic bloodshed in the former communist state of Yugoslavia was certain to be slowed down. Richard Holbrooke, the assistant secretary of state who was leading the delegation and was in a separate car, said a meeting with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic scheduled for Sunday would be postponed for eight days. Most warfronts were quiet but three children were killed when two Bosnian Serb shells blasted the U.N. "safe area" of Gorzade in eastern Bosnia on Sunday, a U.N. spokesman said. The shells struck the Mus-

(Continued on page 7)

Saudi beheadings dent strength of Turkish Islamists

By Alistair Bell
Reuter

ANKARA — Outrage over the beheading of four Turks in Saudi Arabia is denting the Islamist movement in Muslim but officially secular Turkey, political analysts said.

The executions, carried out for drug smuggling under the Saudi interpretation of Islamic Sharia law, are being held up by secularists and a sensationalist Turkish press as an example of what could be in store for Turkey if Islamists are not halted.

"These incidents show once again that we have to protect the secular republic," Deputy Prime Minister, Hikmet Cetin told relatives of some of the 40 Turks still facing execution in Saudi Arabia.

Big advances by the Islam-based Welfare Party in local elections last year awoke secularist fears of a return to Sharia in Turkey, scrapped in the 1920s in Westernising reforms.

Welfare has not specifically said it will implement Islamic law if it came to power, and its control of Ankara and Istanbul, won at the 1994 polls, has meant little change in city life.

But the party's critics suspect welfare conceals ambitions to convert Turkey into a strict Islamic state.

"The executions have been highly negative for them. On the one hand they say there's no justification in Islam for it, but on the other hand they're not getting up and protesting," said Tervik Kizinkaya of the secularist Ataturk Philosophy Society.

Welfare deputy leader Abdullah Gul told Reuters it was wrong to see the executions as the will of Islam. Party leader Necmettin Erbakan has said he will write to Saudi King Fahd pleading for mercy for the remaining Turks.

The party says Mr. Erbakan in the past successfully

intervened through Islamic contacts in the kingdom to save a Turk facing execution.

Protesters in Kilis, the conservative hometown of two of the beheaded Turks, burned a Saudi flag and shouted slogans denouncing Sharia at a demonstration last week.

Turkish media have led public anger at the execution of the Turks, convicted for smuggling an aphrodisiac drug.

Newspapers have printed gory photographs of Saudi beheadings and mutilations in Somalia as a warning of what they call the horrors of Sharia.

One daily published a cartoon of an executioner dressed in Arab robes with Welfare's initials written on them about to decapitate a victim symbolising Turkish secularism.

Analysts said the anti-Saudi atmosphere may help Prime Minister Tansu Ciller win back some of the support her right-wing party is believed to have lost to Welfare.

"I'm very impressed by the way the government is manipulating the media. It does put Welfare in a difficult position," one Western diplomat said.

Welfare's 38 deputies were Ms. Ciller's most implacable opponents in her recent attempts to liberalise the military-era constitution.

Ms. Ciller hailed the eventual approval of the changes last month as a victory over Islamist extremists.

Turkish Islamists say their opponents are taking advantage of the Saudi executions to portray them in a bad light.

"Maybe a despotic administration has (approved the beheadings) too quickly and without investigating thoroughly. But a sector of the Turkish media is using them as a vehicle to attack the Islamic religion," the Islamist daily Zaman said.

Palestinians in Hebron get little water as settlers swim in pools

HEBRON, Occupied West Bank (AP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin ordered the military government in the West Bank to find an immediate solution Sunday to a water shortage that has left Palestinian homes in Hebron without running water.

Residents of the city said 70 per cent of the homes had no running water and that there was a one-week wait to receive water from city trucks.

Palestinian youth drew water from wells and carried plastic buckets to their homes Sunday, while trucks hauled water around the city and selling for as much as 130 shekels (about \$40) for two cubic metres.

"For sure we are making lots of money," said truck driver Younis Asfour. The water shortage has been going on all summer.

but first drew the attention of Israelis over the weekend, when television contrasted scenes of dried-up pipes and trucks scaling water with pictures of Jewish settlers in nearby Kiryat Arba swimming in pools and tending lush gardens.

"Water hasn't reached my house for two months," said vegetable peddler Fahme Abu Sneneh, a father of seven. "Everything is for the settlers and we have to suffer."

Hebron Mayor Mustafa Natche accused the Israelis of taking more than their share of the water and of charging Palestinians 20 times more than the settlers for the water.

Israeli water officials said Israel was supplying Hebron with 10,000 cubic metres of water daily, but that half of that was lost due to leaks and thefts.

They blamed the shortage on mismanagement by Palestinian city officials.

"Water is coming to Hebron, but the problem is the network there, the distribution," Amos Epstein, director of the Mekorot Water company, told Israel radio.

Cabinet ministers demanded Sunday that something be done to alleviate the problem.

"We as lords are acting in a brutal and ethnicocratic way," said Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni. "What we are seeing is horrifying. I hope that our people who are responsible for the water will understand that there are things that are forbidden even when you are a Jewish conqueror."

The tug-of-war over water, the Middle East's most precious resource is one of the most difficult issues left

in the Israel-Palestinian talks on expanding Palestinian self-rule in the West Bank.

Israel gets more than a third of their water from the occupied West Bank and insist on keeping control over springs there even after Palestinian autonomy begins. The Palestinians want water sources to be handed over to them.

"The best solution is for us to kick out the settlers so we can have our water and land and live freely," said Munther Muhtaseb, a 31-year-old college administrator in Hebron.

Mayor Natche said the 80,000 residents needed two and a half times the amount the Israelis were giving them today. He said \$70,000 has been invested in repairing the pipes since May and that the city was seeking donations from Italy to continue the work.

Russians to start work at Bushehr plant this year

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Russian experts will begin construction work on Iran's Bushehr nuclear complex within three months, Moscow's deputy atomic energy minister reportedly said Sunday.

The Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) quoted Yevgeny Reshenikov as saying midway through a one-week visit to Iran that preliminary technical studies "will soon be completed."

Referring to U.S. pressure on Moscow to cancel the estimated \$800 million to \$1 billion deal, "the Russian official stressed that yielding to the U.S. pressure is out of question," according to the agency, monitored in Cyprus.

He added that a Russian company would supply the fuel needed for the power plant.

About 200 Russian nuclear scientists have been in Bushehr since Moscow

signed a contract in January to finish the plant and provide two light water reactors. Some 3,000 more Russians are expected to participate in the project. The plant was started by a German firm before the 1979 Islamic revolution.

The United States has denounced the deal, saying that anything enhancing Iranian nuclear expertise could also eventually help it to make atomic weapons.

Also Sunday, Iran's ambassador to Moscow, Mehdi Safari, told the English-language Iran News that a total of 4,000 Russians are working in Iran on different projects.

He also predicted that the current level of \$800 million worth of Russian-Iranian trade would soar due to cooperation agreements such as the nuclear deal and joint oil projects envisioned in the Gulf and the Caspian Sea.

Uganda reports attacks by Sudan-based rebels

KAMPALA (R) — Thousands of people have fled from villages near the Sudan-Uganda border in northwestern Uganda after anti-government rebels attacked from bases in Sudan, a Ugandan state-owned newspaper reported on Sunday.

The Sunday Vision paper said in a front-page report that the rebels launched aerial and land attacks on border villages in Koboko district with bombs and heavy artillery fire last week.

The attack was blamed on a new rebel group, the West Nile Bank Front (WNBF), which is led by Colonel Juma Oria, who was a commander in former dictator Idi Amin's army in the 1970s.

Residents fled with their belongings to Koboko town, 19 kilometres from the border, the newspaper said. It gave no casualty figures and said the rebels were being helped by Sudan government troops.

Sunday Vision also reported heavy fighting between Sudanese troops and rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which has been fighting a guerrilla war for the last 13 years. The rebels were fleeing pursuing government forces, it added.

Mr. Amin, who ruled from 1971 to 1979 but is now living in exile in Saudi Arabia, was linked to the new rebel group in May, when it was reported to be recruiting men in north-west Uganda. Newspapers said the WNBF was being backed by Zaire and Sudan, and by opposition politicians in the country.

Politicians from the area say Mr. Amin, despite his bloody reputation, still has a strong following among his own tribesmen in north-west Uganda and among Muslims, who were favoured during his rule.

Disclosures of PoW killings prompt Israeli soul-searching

By Karin Laub

The Associated Press

OCCEUED JERUSALEM

A soldier kills a prisoner after forcing him to dig his own grave. Two army cooks stab to death three captives. A commander orders his men to shoot at close range two enemy soldiers whose hands are raised in surrender.

Asked who might be capable of such war crimes, just about everyone in Israel would have pointed to a foreign army, but never sought the culprits at home.

That was until this month when long-suppressed war-time accounts poured forth about the killings of Arab prisoners and civilians by Israeli soldiers in at least three Middle East wars.

The disclosures shook Israel, a country of citizen soldiers raised in the belief that they hold the high moral ground on the battlefield with the Arab armies.

Painful questions emerged from the national debate: Why were the atrocities kept secret for so long? How much did Israel's leaders know? Why were war criminals not punished? Should — and

could — they be prosecuted now?

The Egyptians, acting in part of appease a headline domestic opposition, have demanded an accounting, and Israel's foreign minister has asked the army to prepare a report for Cairo to prevent a further strain in relations.

Controversy also touched some of Israel's leading generals-turned-politicians, including Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Housing Minister Binyamin Ben Eliezer and Rafael Eitan, a right-wing opposition candidate for prime minister.

Some quickly warned that soul-searching would only undermine national morale. Former Defence Minister Ariel Sharon spoke of an "act of national suicide."

But others said that as Israel is making peace with its Arab neighbours, it could well afford a more honest look at the past.

"We always had this fear that we weren't really strong and that we mustn't talk about our weaknesses. But now Israel is more sure of itself, more mature," said historian Benny Morris. "States, like

people, grow up." Ironically, the army itself, which has remained silent through the affair, set in motion the disclosures when it opened its archives to researchers some two years ago.

Mr. Morris said the stage was set by the 1948 war in which no Israeli soldier was punished for war crimes, mainly because Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion felt it would weaken the fighting spirit of his army.

"He thought that if you started fiddling around with the morality of warfare, people would be afraid to carry out their duties," Mr. Morris said.

Michael Bar-Zohar, a former legislator, said prisoner killings were treated forgivingly by all of Israel's leaders.

Mr. Bar-Zohar, who served as spokesman for then-Defence Minister Moshe Dayan after the 1967 war, recalled that his boss only grudgingly addressed the issue.

Having witnessed the killing of three Egyptian prisoners by two Israeli army cooks in 1967, Mr. Bar-Zohar said he urged Dayan to speak out. But Dayan forgot and when

Bar-Zohar reminded him after a speech to officers, the minister returned to the podium and uttered one sentence: "It is forbidden to kill prisoners."

At the same time, Israel's military censor silenced any attempt to report the prisoner killings, said Israeli journalist Uri Averbach. He said his last unsuccessful attempt came in 1990.

Military historian Meir Pail said the army preferred to deal with the matter internally and that he knew of three or four soldiers who went to prison for war crimes.

One reason for secrecy was the fear that reports of Israeli atrocities would provide a pretext for enemy troops to kill Israeli captives.

However, some Israeli veterans said the hatred on both sides was so great at the time it was unlikely Arab troops needed a pretext.

Mr. Bar-Zohar recalled how his paratroop unit marched along the Suez Canal in the 1973 war and came across a dozen dead comrades lying face down, each with a bullet in the back of the head and hands tied behind the back.

When Mr. Bar-Zohar's

unit captured some 20 Egyptians a day or two later, the Israelis lined the captives up against a wall and cocked their weapons, preparing to shoot to avenge their comrades.

But none of the Israelis could pull the trigger, Mr. Bar-Zohar said, adding, "I was very proud at that moment."

Despite such examples of humane conduct, more disclosures are likely, Mr. Bar-Zohar said, adding, "I have threatened to name accomplices if scapegoated, and others may level charges to settle political scores."

The attorney general has said he would check whether he could prosecute. However, Israel has no war crimes law and murder charges can only be filed for up to 20 years.

Author Zeev Hefetz, a former government spokesman, said Israel might open itself up to criticism if it did not prosecute.

"We have a problem because we have been militarily and correctly demanding justice for Nazi war criminals. It's a little bit late to argue now that it was 40 years ago, let's forget it."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran protests questioning of Paris embassy employees

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran is protesting the questioning by French authorities of two Iranian embassy employees in connection with last week's bomb attack in Paris, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported. The French charge d'affaires was called to the foreign ministry in Tehran on Friday to hear a "strong protest" from the ministry's director-general for Western European affairs, Ali Ahani, IRNA reported Saturday night. The agency, monitored in Cyprus, quoted Mr. Ahani as telling the diplomat, who was summoned in the absence of the French ambassador, that the French action was contrary to international norms. It said he demanded an explanation. IRNA said the charge d'affaires, who was not named, promised to convey Iran's protest to the French government. In France, the authorities Saturday focused on Algerian extremists as the prime suspects for Thursday's attack, which wounded 17 people near the Arc de Triomphe. Investigators began narrowing the probe after a witness said he saw two North African men trying to stuff a package into a trash can near the famous archway minutes before the attack.

AP Bahrain bureau chief dies

CAIRO (AP) — Aly Mahmoud, chief of bureau for the Associated Press in Bahrain, died Saturday in a Cairo hospital. He was 57. Cause of death was liver failure, with complications caused by diabetes, relatives said. Mahmoud joined the AP in his native Cairo in 1958 and transferred to the Beirut bureau in 1971. After covering the opening years of the Lebanese civil war, he opened the AP office in Bahrain in 1980 and headed it until his death. "Aly was a consummate professional, dedicated to reporting with accuracy, speed and insight," said Claude Ertson, AP vice president and director of AP World Services. Tom Kent, the AP's international editor, said: "Aly was an accurate reporter with many exclusives to his credit and knew his region with uncanny accuracy." Survivors include: Mahmoud's wife, Rawhiya; three daughters, Dr. Nabel Aly of Lille, France; Nagwa Aly of New York, and Nahla Aly of Nicosia, Cyprus, and two sisters and seven brothers, all living in Egypt.

Bank teller machine and school bombed

ISTANBUL (AP) — A bank and a primary school were damaged by firebombs Saturday in the Kadikoy district on the Asian side of the city. Nobody was injured. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the overnight attack. Various militant groups, including Kurdish separatists, leftist extremists and Muslim militants, have been active for years in this metropolis of 12 million. Banks and cash machines have been the target of a spate of similar attacks over the past six weeks. No one has claimed responsibility and there have been no arrests.

Dancing bears released to wild

KARACABEY (AP) — After years of being trained to dance for paying customers, 12 brown bears have been set free after being shown again how to live in the wild. They were among the 27 bears that have been under treatment for a year for various injuries resulting from their dancing years, the daily Hürriyet newspaper said. They were also trained to readjust to life in a wildlife sanctuary created especially for them. Bears moving on two feet in seeming harmony to tunes played by their owner is a favourite street show in poor neighbourhoods of some Turkish cities. Nearly 200 of them are believed to be used throughout the country. Animal rights activists, however, began a campaign last year to rescue bears from owners who mistreated them. The dancing bears taken away from their owners last year were found in miserable shape. One baby bear was found to be dependent on alcohol. The soles of the feet of some were burnt apparently with hot iron when they failed to dance during the initial training. The bears have been treated at Uludag University's veterinary school, about 300 kilometres southwest of Istanbul.

First Arab AIDS hot-line opens in October

CAIRO (AFP) — The first counselling hot line for AIDS victims in the Arab World will open in October in the Egyptian capital, health official Nasr Al Sayid told AFP on Saturday. The "Counsel and Hot-line Centre," to be opened in the Cairo slum of Imbaba, "will have three lines in service. Patients can call us 24 hours a day with complete confidentiality," said Mr. Sayid, who heads the AIDS programme in the Egyptian health ministry. "It is a matter of giving psychological help in their distress," he added. The centre, which will also study ways to stop the spread of AIDS in the Arab World, will employ 15 people as well as two doctors and two psychologists. The American Ford Foundation backed the centre with a \$300,000 grant, Mr. Sayid said. There are 300 people with full-blown AIDS in Egypt and 110 others carrying the HIV virus, Mr. Sayid said.

Singer Emad Abdul Haleem dies

CAIRO (AP) — Emad Abdul Haleem, once hailed as the successor to the immensely popular Egyptian singer Abdel Haleem Hafez, has died of an apparent drug overdose. He was 35. Abdul Haleem's body was found Sunday morning on a busy street in Cairo, police officials said. He was taken to a hospital where a preliminary report by doctors said he died of a heroin overdose. When he started singing in the 1980s, Abdul Haleem's voice was likened to that of Abdul Haleem Hafez, one of the Arab World's most popular singers who died an untimely death in 1977. But his career took a turn for the worse after he began using drugs. Recently, Abdul Haleem was singing at a small Cairo nightclub.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:00 Animal of Farthing Wood
14:30 Hey Day
15:00 Survival
15:30 Families
17:00 Children's programme — Doug
17:30 Film: L'Ombré De La Terre
18:00 News in French
19:00 News in English
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 An End to Silence
20:00 McHale's Navy
20:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
21:15 Hearts of the West
22:00 News in English
22:25 The Ruth Rendell's Mysteries
23:25 The Film: "Witness"

PRAYER TIMES

04:35 Fajr
05:38 (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:39 Dhuhr
16:17 'Asr
19:19 Maghreb
20:42 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Swiffield, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terrasanta Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 625226

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Weather is expected to be fine with temperatures below average and winds northerly to moderate to active. In Agaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Mid./Max. temp. 17/30

Agaba 24 / 37

Deserts 15 / 35

Jordan Valley 23 / 37

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 31, Agaba 37 Humidity

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

readings: Amman 35 per cent. Agaba 29 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Fayez Dabbas 759155
Dr. Ramzi Mzawi 894788
Dr. Awni Hawandeh 77665
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 846070
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637855
Nairoukh pharmacy 62672
Al Salem pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmiciani pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 62672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID: Dr. Fayez Al Qadi 248743
Aljib pharmacy (—)

ZARQA: Dr. Akram Haddad 985550
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Emergency 630341

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 609800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality 767111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 64428116

Aklich Maternity, J. Amn. 64244172

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Mulhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmiciani 66417174

Shmiciani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muhsen Hospital 667279

The Islamic, Abdali 66617737

Al-Ahli, Abdali 66416446

Italian, Al-Muhajra 7710103

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafiah 77511126

Army, Marka 89161115

Queen Alia Hospital 66224050

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Center for Heart and Special Surgery 845199

ZARQA: Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Australian delegation to lobby in Europe for support against French nuclear tests

CANBERRA (AFP) — A multi-party Australian delegation is to make an eight-month European visit next month seeking support for opposition to French nuclear tests, a minister said Sunday.

The mission will aim to get backing for "constructive measures" against the planned test series at Mururoa Atoll, including a U.N. general assembly resolution for an immediate ban on all testing, said Gordon Bilney, Pacific Island affairs minister and a leader of the six-member delegation.

France has said it will start a new series of eight tests at the Atoll next month.

The six-member parliamentary delegation will leave Sept. 2 on a visit taking in Bonn, Brussels, London, Paris, the Hague, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Vienna, returning Sept. 17, it was announced.

It would brief governments on a declaration on nuclear testing endorsed at last week's meeting in Brisbane of environment ministers from South Pacific countries, Mr. Bilney said.

"The serious misgivings and profound concerns expressed by the governments represented in Brisbane stem from the significant gaps in data available to the international scientific community and the lack of

candour and transparency on the part of the French government," he said.

Mr. Bilney called on the French government to meet the Pacific countries' request "for open access by the scientific community to the test zones, and to all scientific data from past tests."

The health of South Pacific islanders should be systematically assessed to measure the impact of French testing, John Best, president of the Australian Faculty of Public Health Medicine said Sunday.

"There is evidence and anecdotes that there is increasing thyroid cancer in the Pacific," he said in an interview, adding there was a need for "a systematic review of what's going on."

In a letter published in the Medical Journal of Australia, Mr. Best asked doctors to help pay for placing anti-nuclear test advertisements in French newspapers.

The adverts would bring Australia's concerns "as close to the French people as the morning baguette," he said.

Australian and New Zealand doctors have raised only about 14,000 dollars (US\$10,000) towards an estimated 130,000 dollars needed for the advertising

campaign.

Other delegation members are Roger Price and Garrie Gibson of the ruling Labour Party, opposition foreign affairs spokesman Alexander Downer of the Liberal Party, former National Party leader Ian Sinclair and Vicki Bourne, foreign affairs spokesperson for the opposition Democrat Party.

Peace Boat denied entry to Senegal port

A Japanese boat cruising the world on an anti-nuclear mission has been denied a port call at Dakar after holding a protest in Marseilles last week, Peace Boat headquarters said Sunday.

The boat, carrying 350 Japanese members of the non-governmental organisation, was denied permission to dock in the former French colony and banned from entering Senegalese waters, the group said.

Peace Boat said it suspected the denial was linked to a demonstration in Marseilles last week by some 120 cruise members against France's planned nuclear tests in the South Pacific.

The 15,000-tonne Kureliya has continued its four-month cruise with stops in 19 countries, including China, Vietnam, Egypt and Greece, to hold exhibitions on the



Women demonstrate through central Tokyo August 20 protesting China's latest nuclear testing and France's plan of nuclear testing in the South Pacific. More than 7,000 women took part in the anti-nuclear and anti-war demonstrations and rallies in the Japanese capital and Yokohama today, a spokeswoman of the rally organiser said (Reuters photo)

atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The Peace Boat group had

planned to hold its exhibition in Dakar Aug. 22 and 23 when it was scheduled to

dock in the West African state of Senegal.

The Senegalese govern-

ment denied a request to hold the exhibition, the group said.

Taiwanese president denounces use of nuclear weapons

TAIPEI (AFP) — Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui on Sunday reaffirmed his rejection of nuclear weapons shortly after calling for an Asia-Pacific security alliance to bolster stability.

Mr. Lee, who is under mounting pressure from China over his attempts to strengthen Taiwan's international image, said "no country in the world will dare use the (nuclear) weapon."

He told a farmers' union conference that countries "which are making it are just afraid that others are making it too," the TVBS cable television station reported.

"Therefore, we would be better off without it," he

added in an apparent reference to a nuclear test last Thursday by China.

Last month, Mr. Lee triggered international concern with a comment to the national assembly that Taiwan might "restudy" its shelved nuclear weapon programme.

He later denied he meant reviving the programme. His comment had come in the midst of a series of Chinese missile tests of the Taiwan coast that caused panic in the nationalist island.

A second series of exercises started last week, also off the northern coast of Taiwan, has heightened security fears, with the Taiwan armed

forces on top alert.

Taiwan on Sunday invited Japan to support Mr. Lee's call for an Asia-Pacific security alliance, the Taipei-based Broadcasting Corporation of China (BBC) reported.

He made the remarks during the closing ceremony of the two-day forum in the southern city of Kaohsiung. Some 130 scholars from Taiwan and Japan attended the meeting.

On Saturday Mr. Lee appealed to Asia-Pacific nations to consider a regional security system. He said the main concern among the Taiwanese people was to maintain cross-strait stability.

the Institution of International Relations, said Taiwan and Japan should work together to install a security system in the region in the face of China's military buildup.

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Democrats downplay retirements, defections, predict '96 victories

NEW ORLEANS (Agencies) — The chairman of the Democratic National Committee downplayed talk of an independent presidential run by Sen. Bill Bradley and predicted Saturday that the party will maintain the White House and gain strength in Congress in 1996.

Mr. Bradley's "comment about a possible independent candidacy was not a major thrust of what he said," Chairman Don Fowler said as the committee held its summer meeting in New Orleans.

Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland added: "Sen. Bradley made it very, very clear that he agrees with the Democratic Party's principles."

"I expect him to remain a Democrat. I also expect him, as he said, to continue his contributions to the public policy of this country," he said.

Mr. Bradley, a New Jersey Democrat who was disaffected with both major parties, announced Wednesday that he would retire from the Senate when his third term expires in January 1997. At a news conference the next day, he said he wouldn't rule out an independent presidential bid in 1996.

On Saturday, interviewed on former New York Governor Mario Cuomo's nationally syndicated radio show, Mr. Bradley resisted being pinned down on the issue.

"You said you would consider the possibility of running," Mr. Cuomo told Mr. Bradley in New York.

"No," Mr. Bradley replied, "as someone who has spent a long time with words, I said I wouldn't rule it out."

The Democratic National

Committee meeting was held in a state where another long-time Democratic senator, J. Bennett Johnston, recently announced his retirement, and where Congressman Billy Tauzin recently defected to the Republicans amid widespread speculation that he will run for Johnston's seat.

Dole and Gramm tie in Iowa poll

In another development in Ames, Iowa, Senators Bob Dole and Phil Gramm tied for first in a straw poll of Republican voters on Saturday night in a straw poll for the Republican presidential nomination.

Mr. Dole, the Senate Majority Leader from Kansas and the front-runner for the party nomination, and Mr. Gramm, from Texas, both captured 2,582 votes, or roughly 24 per cent of the 10,598 votes cast.

Finishing a close third in the 10-man field was television commentator Pat Buchanan with 1,922 votes or 18 per cent. Former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander was fourth with 1,156 votes, or 11 per cent.

A raucous crowd sporting T-shirts and waving placards for their candidates crowded Iowa State University's basketball arena for the straw poll, which takes place six months before the February 12 Iowa caucuses, the official start of the presidential primary season.

Capturing fifth place was inspirational speaker and radio talk show Alan Keyes with 8 per cent, one vote ahead of Michigan businessman Morry Taylor. Polling well behind were Indiana Senator Richard Lugar, Cal-

ifornia Governor Pete Wilson, California Representative Robert Dornan and Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter.

It appeared few attendees paid for their \$25 tickets to participate in the straw poll.

The Iowa caucuses, next year, precede the traditional first-in-the-nation New Hampshire primary by less than a week, establishing a benchmark for the state of state primaries to come.

"New Hampshire is a better indicator of who is going to be president than we are," Iowa's Republican governor Terry Branstad said of the New England State's primary.

"But if you finish in the top tier (in Iowa) you go on," Mr. Branstad said. "That's the role that we play."

In the last contested Republican primary battle in 1988, Mr. Dole won Iowa's caucuses, beating former vice president George Bush.

Organisers estimated 13,500 tickets had been sold to what amounts to a fundraising event for the state Republican Party, with 10,000 people filling most of the arena's seats to listen to 15-minute speeches from each candidate.

The master of ceremonies, former vice-president Dan Quayle, ticked off the Republicans' wish list, topped by replacing President Bill Clinton in November 1996.

"Our mission is simple," Mr. Quayle said. "We need to fill the vacancy in the White House. I'm talking about a vacancy in leadership, a vacancy in confidence, a vacancy in character."

Indonesia to issue 190 million ID cards

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia expects to be able to issue new, foolproof identity cards and citizenship numbers to its 190 million people in three to four years, the official ANTARA news agency reported on Saturday.

The report quoted Home Affairs Minister Yogie Memet as saying the existing cards issued at provincial levels would be replaced by a national citizen identity number (NIK) at an average cost of 3,000 rupiah (\$1.36) each. "A national ID card can neither be copied nor falsified."

Sri lankan father of 3 falls for mother-in-law

COLOMBO (R) — A Sri Lankan father of three has discarded his young wife for an older woman, his mother-in-law. The Sunday Times of Sri Lanka newspaper said the 32-year-old man had been advised by police to give up the affair with the 42-year-old woman and return to his wife at their home in Kurunegala, 80 kilometres northeast of Colombo. "But he was in no mood to listen," the newspaper said under a headline "Stupid Cupid". Police advised his 28-year-old wife to file for financial support.

Italy's 'bikini war' a publicity stunt - mayor

DIANO MARINA, Italy (R) — Mayor Andrea Guglieri, who captured Italian and foreign headlines last week by declaring war on bodies not fit for bikinis, said it was a publicity stunt. "Now all the world knows about Diano Marina," Mr. Guglieri said in a telephone interview. He described his "bikini war" idea — having police ask swimsuit wearers in the town streets to cover up protruding bellies and unsightly bulges — as a provocative gesture, meant to provoke public reaction. The beauty of this Italian Riviera resort, he explained, is not just made up of avenues, sidewalks and buildings but also of the people on the streets.

British opposition extends poll lead

LONDON (R) — Britain's opposition Labour Party has extended its lead over the ruling Conservatives despite a recent spate of internal bickering, an opinion poll showed.

But left-wing criticism of reformist leader Tony Blair showed no sign of letting up on Sunday. One member of parliament (MP) said disillusioned leftwingers could form a breakaway party if Mr. Blair continued his overhaul of Labour.

The opinion poll, in the Sunday Times newspaper, showed 54 per cent of Britons would back Labour in a general election, unchanged from the party's standing in a similar poll in July.

But the Conservatives suffered a two point drop in popularity to 25 per cent as

the minority Liberal Democrats enjoyed a three point boost to 17 per cent.

The figures were grim news for Prime Minister John Major, who must call a general election by May 1997.

The poll, from the national opinion polls organisation, is the first to appear since a year-long honeymoon enjoyed by Mr. Blair after election as leader ended.

In the past month, he has come under fire from MPs and trade union leaders who fear the party is jettisoning its traditional concern for the poor in an attempt to woo middle class voters.

Writing in the News of the World newspaper on Sunday, left-wing Labour MP Ken Livingstone

warned of the possibility of a breakaway party being formed if Mr. Blair moved Labour any further to the right.

"There could even be a new left-wing party created out of the 38,000 Labour supporters who have torn up their party cards in protest at Labour's drift to the right," he said.

"Tony Blair has reached the point where any further shift to the right will lose us more support than it gains."

Labour suffered a breakaway in the 1980s when, on that occasion, a group of prominent right-wingers formed a new social democratic party. That enterprise, in reaction to a drift to the left, ultimately proved a failure.

Another Labour MP, Alan Simpson, told BBC radio

Mr. Blair had surrounded himself with bright young people with shallow roots in the party.

"There is a danger that he has a cohort of young people around him whose main sense of angst is more to do with puberty than poverty," he said.

But Mr. Blair loyalist David Blunkett, the party's education spokesman, said critics failed to understand the need to adapt Labour principles to modern conditions.

"There is not a contradiction between bringing the party and the nation into the 21st century and remaining true to those key principles which brought us into the Labour Party," he said.

Sri Lanka police smash Tamil rebel financial cell

COLOMBO (R) — The chief of police in the Sri Lankan capital said on Sunday the financial hub of operations for militant Tamil Tiger separatists had been smashed.

The funds manager for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had been detained, along with several others, on Friday and Saturday and a "couple of million rupees" (\$40,000) seized, Colombo police chief G.B. Kotakadeniya told Reuters.

He said the manager had been running an office in the heart of the city "with a cell phone and fax machine and things like that". The funds had been collected from Colombo businessmen and overseas donations to

finance the Tigers' war effort, he said.

"The financial cell of the LTTE has been bust open," Mr. Kotakadeniya said, adding that the investigation leading up to the arrests had lasted two months.

"The money comes from big business and from abroad and was sent to the north to fund the whole war effort," he said.

The police were still trailing more suspects, he said.

The police efforts coincided with their investigation into a bomb blast in the capital this month when a Tiger suicide bomber blew up his cart of coconuts, killing 24 people.

Several people have been arrested in connection with that

blast in the fashionable Cinnamon Gardens neighbourhood of colonial-style office and embassy buildings. Mr. Kotakadeniya is also in charge of that investigation.

The police chief said more details of the arrests and possible charges would be released on Monday.

The Tigers are one of the world's most formidable and well equipped guerrilla outfits, boasting a makeshift navy, an air wing, mobile radar, suicide squads and anti-aircraft missiles, all of which cost money.

The Tigers control the Jaffna peninsula in the north and levy their own taxes, but much of their financing comes from sympathisers living overseas.

A Jaffna Tamil now living in Colombo said last week many expatriate Tamils living in North America, Europe and Australia, contribute to the war effort out of guilt.

"They are not fighting, they have good jobs, their children are at good schools," he said. "They are paying conscience money."

Sri Lanka rejects Red Cross terms

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan government Saturday rejected conditions set by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to resume escorting food ships to rebel-held areas in northern Sri Lanka, the

state-run radio said.

The ICRC stand that it will escort cargo ships to Point Pedro in rebel-controlled area and not to the military port of Kanekesanthurai was not acceptable to the government, the radio said.

In the past, the vessels bound for rebel-controlled areas were first checked at the military port. Last month, the rebels objected to the practice and withdrew guarantees not to attack the food ships.

Food supplies have not reached Jaffna peninsula in the north since the military launched a major offensive early this month against Tamil separatists. The fighting lasted for a week.

Zaire said to expel Rwandan and Burundian refugees

LONDON (R) — Zaire has begun expelling Rwandan refugees who have been living in camps since they fled civil war at home last year, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reported on Sunday.

The report, monitored in London, said the United Nations refugee agency had appealed to the Zairean government to halt the expulsions.

It said 200 Rwandans had been expelled from camps around Goma. Some 50 or 60 Burundian refugees were sent back to Burundi from Uvira. More were expected to follow, the BBC said.

The move follows a decision

by the United Nations to suspend an arms embargo against Rwanda, which upset the Zaire authorities, the BBC report said.

A U.N. Security Council resolution suspended the embargo for a year on condition that weapons were only for government use and were imported only through specified points into Rwanda.

Spokesman Manuel de Almera e Silva for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told the BBC Zaire "randomly rounded up" 180 refugees on Saturday and sent them back to Rwanda.

Last two factions sign Liberian peace accord

ABUJA (AFP) — Two Liberian militias which initially refused to sign a new peace accord to end the six-year civil war finally put their names to it early Sunday, an official of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) said.

ECOWAS Director of Information Adama Gaye said the last two factions signed the deal around 2 a.m. (0100 GMT) at a hotel in Nigeria's federal capital Abuja.

Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) press spokesman Arthur Dennis confirmed in a telephone interview that the faction had signed, as had the Krahn wing of the United Liberation Movement (ULIMO), led by Roosevelt Johnson.

However, Mr. Dennis said the AFL had only signed in return for guarantees from the mediating bodies that its "concerns" would be

"addressed on the ground" once the peace accord is implemented.

Late Saturday the AFL threatened to return to Monrovia without signing an agreement unless it was given undertakings that it would not be disarmed along with the other six factions.

Mr. Johnson's faction initially refused to sign in a dispute over jobs. Mr. Dennis added, in particular the speakership of a new transitional legislative assembly, which it was demanding but was refused.

Announcing the accord at the ECOWAS secretariat building here late Saturday, Ghana's Foreign Minister Obed Asamoah said it represented the "end" of efforts by ECOWAS to resolve the conflict, which according to official estimates has left over 150,000 dead.

Warlords have signed and broken some 10 accords

prior to the Abuja agreement.

Under the Abuja accord as adopted, the AFL and the Krahn wing of ULIMO would have no seat on the new council of state, or collective presidency.

However, Mr. Bowen was guaranteed a "ministerial or other senior government" post and will remain AFL chief of staff during the transitional period, which should last "approximately" one year, according to the accord.

Two minor warlords, Francois Massaquoi of the Lofa Defence Force (LDF) and Tom Woewiyu of the Central Revolutionary Council (CRC) dissident wing of the NPFL were given the same assurance, as were two Woewiyu allies in the current interim government, Laval Supuwood and Samuel Dokie.

Burmese army and ethnic minorities resume fighting

MAE SOT, Thailand (AP) — Fierce battles near the Thai-Burma border have erupted again between Burmese government troops and rebels of the ethnic minority Karennis, a Thai officer said Sunday.

Government troops seeking the Karenni headquarters fired constant barrages with 120 mm artillery guns Friday, said the officer, who demanded

anonymity. Thai border patrol police fired warning shots.

There was no word on casualties or results of the fighting, near the border of Thailand's northern province of Mae Hong Son.

The provincial capital is north of this key border town and about 650 kilometres north of Bangkok.

The Karennis are among sev-

eral ethnic minority rebel groups that due to difficulties and pressure signed truce pacts with the government in recent months. The Karennis say the government army violated the agreement in June by forcing civilians to work as military porters, seizing civilian trucks and horses, and preparing for an offensive against the Karennis.

Train collision leaves 250 dead, 400 injured in India

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — At least 250 people were killed and another 400 injured Sunday when an express train crashed into another train that had stopped suddenly after hitting a cow, a news agency reported.

The accident occurred outside Firozabad railway station when a signalman cleared the Puroshottam express on to a track without realizing that the Kalindi express had stopped midway to the next station after clearing the signal post, Press Trust of India said quoting unnamed railroad officials.

Sunday's accident appeared to be the worst in recent times. In 1989, 107 people were killed in southern India when a train plunged into a river.

Both trains involved in Sunday's accident were bound for New Delhi, 300 kilometres north of Firozabad in Uttar Pradesh state.

Most of the 2,200 passengers in the two trains were sleeping when the collision occurred, United News of India said quoting railroad

officials.

The three rear cars of the Kalindi express and the engine and two cars of the Puroshottam express crumpled like balls of paper, Press Trust said.

The accident site was littered with mangled bodies, severed limbs, and chunks of human flesh, said Manas Patnaik, 29, who was traveling from the eastern state of Orissa to New Delhi on the Puroshottam express.

"I stumbled several times on severed limbs and some people — I don't know whether they were sleeping or dead," Mr. Patnaik told United News in an interview.

He said he had survived the accident because he was in a rear car of the train.

"The entire area was reverberating with cries and shrieks," Mr. Patnaik said.

More than 15 hours after the collision, rescuers were still discovering bodies in the mangled debris of the cars and the death toll could rise further, agencies said.

Rescuers of India's state-owned railroad company were using cranes to lift the

smashed cars that had telescoped into each other.

The injured had been admitted to hospitals in Firozabad and in the nearby towns of Tundla and Agra.

At least 14 trains were held up or were being diverted along other tracks, it said.



Rescuers search for bodies among the wreckage of the passenger trains after collision in north Indian Firozabad town of Uttar Pradesh state on August 20 (Reuters photo)

India tells kidnappers no military action planned

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — Indian authorities Sunday told a Muslim separatist group holding four Western tourists in Kashmir that no military operation was being planned to rescue the hostages, an official said here.

"The abductors have been told that the government is not contemplating any rescue operation as it is apprehended by them," a spokesman said in this Kashmir summer capital.

"The government is in touch with the Al Faran (the group which claimed responsibility for the abductions)," he said. "A fresh appeal has been made to the abductors to see reason and let off the four innocent tourists."

The Telegraph daily said on Sunday that "the Kashmir government has zeroed in on the exact hideout used by the Al Faran," adding that 20 anti-terrorist experts from the United States, Britain and Germany were camping in Srinagar.

But authorities here said

five British and three U.S. anti-terrorist experts who arrived in Kashmir would only assist and advise the Indian government.

The Al Faran, which has already killed a fifth hostage, Norwegian Hans-Christian Ostro, had on Friday threatened to kill the four Western tourists if Indian commandoes launched a rescue operation.

The group seized an American and two Britons from Kashmir's Pahalgam district July 4 and a German and a Norwegian separately four days later.

Mr. Ostro was killed last weekend and his beheaded torso dumped near a remote village with the words Al Faran carved on his chest.

An Al Faran statement issued here Friday said the government's refusal to release 15 Muslim militants from jail was to blame for the death of Mr. Ostro.

"Internal or international condemnation will not make us back down from our demands."

"If the government wants

to see the other four hostages alive, it should immediately release the 15 militants on our list," said the group which is believed to comprise mainly of Afghan mercenaries.

"There is no other way to secure the release of these foreigners, and once a military offensive begins the hostages will be killed," it said.

In an unrelated development, unidentified Muslim militants kidnapped seven passengers from a bus travelling to Srinagar from the Kashmir winter capital Jammu overnight Sunday, the Press Trust of India said.

The rebels killed one of the captives near the town of Pampore, an official said, adding that another had managed to escape. No militant group has claimed responsibility for the abductions.

More than 12,000 people

Five killed, hundreds detained in Karachi

KARACHI (AFP) — Five people were killed in violence-plagued Karachi Sunday while security forces detained hundreds in the city's western district as part of a new anti-militant drive, officials and residents said.

Officials said police killed two "terrorists" in the western Orangi district while snipers shot dead three people elsewhere in the city.

Earlier police and paramilitary rangers cordoned-off western Karachi's Pak Colony neighbourhood and launched a house-to-house search for arms and militants, residents said.

The neighbourhood has a mainly poor population of around 400,000.

Residents said police whisked away hundreds of people, mostly youths. Some were blindfolded and bundled into waiting police vehicles, they said.

Police confirmed that some people had been detained for questioning but refused to give a figure.

"We have already released some and we will release

more people after screening," a rangers official said.

He said the security forces arrested "some hardcore militants" and recovered automatic weapons during the operation.

Police claimed the militants belonged to Karachi's main opposition party, the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) which represents Urdu-speaking migrants from India who arrived after the partition of the subcontinent in 1947.

Sunday's action was the latest in a series of operations carried out in several districts of the port city over the past two months after Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto vowed to purge Karachi of "terrorists."

The security forces said they had arrested some 500 militants and more than 80 terrorists "had been killed so far."

More than 1,200 people have been killed in the country's commercial capital in political and ethnic violence since January this year.

Dudayev backs peace accord — report

MOSCOW (AFP) — Separatist Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev backs current efforts at establishing peace in Chechnya, his spokesman was quoted as saying Sunday.

Mr. Dudayev met for three hours Saturday with his military commander Aslan Maskhadov, who is one of the chief negotiators in talks with the Russians, the ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Movladi Udugov as saying.

Mr. Udugov said Mr. Dudayev reaffirmed his support for the peace accord signed July 30, which exchanges disarmament of Chechen independence fighters for a withdrawal of most Russian troops from Chechnya, ITAR-TASS reported.

However, Mr. Dudayev and Mr. Maskhadov both said that "implementation of the agreement on withdrawal of troops is stalled on the Russian side," Mr. Udugov said.

Mr. Dudayev opposes some provisions in the accord, Mr. Udugov said, without giving details.

But Mr. Udugov denied Russian reports of a split between Mr. Maskhadov, who masterminded the seven-month war against the vastly greater Russian forces, and Mr. Dudayev.

"They are on common ground over the main issue of resolving the conflict in a peaceful way," Mr. Udugov said.

Meanwhile, one of the most feared Chechen guerrilla leaders warned that he was prepared to carry out attacks in several Russian cities, Interfax news agency reported.

Shamil Basayev, who led a raid and mass hostage-taking on the southern Russian city of Budennovsk in June, said that attacks would be carried out if Russian forces continued to use force in Chechnya, Interfax said.

In a statement addressed to the Russian people, Mr. Basayev said Russian forces were "flagrantly violating" the peace process.

"I appeal to the peoples of Russia to stop their rulers. If federal troops continue to use force on the territory of the Chechen republic Ichkeria, retaliatory measures will immediately be taken," the statement said.

Mr. Basayev said that civilians would suffer most from such attacks. "The Russian government has provided safety for itself," he said.

More than 100 people died in the fighting in Budennovsk and subsequent hostage crisis. Many of the victims were killed by Russian gunfire during attempts to storm the hospital where Mr. Basayev was holding his captives.

Moscow agreed to start the current peace process and ceasefire as conditions for Mr. Basayev releasing his hostages.

Chechen rebel authorities have agreed to help Russian forces capture Mr. Basayev for his role in the Budennovsk crisis.

However, there appeared to be little chance that the separatists would turn over Mr. Basayev, who is seen as a hero by many Chechens.



A Chechen fighter adds his Kalashnikov assault rifle to weapons and ammunition handed in by Chechens in the village of Zandak near the Chechen-Dagestan border (Reuters photo)

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Human Rights File

A battle worth fighting

THREE CHEERS to President Bill Clinton for taking on the tobacco industry and pledging to put additional curbs on the sale of cigarettes to young people. President Clinton seized upon the finding of the Federal Food and Drug Agency (FDA) that nicotine is an addictive drug to begin his crusade against smoking. I see this giant leap forward as only the beachhead that anti-smokers have always wanted to establish to stage their ultimate attack on smoking as an epidemic that costs lives just as any other disease. The logic of this new American campaign is obvious: Since smoking cigarettes causes cancer, heart diseases and respiratory ailments, as all medical findings have substantiated over and over again, it should be treated as other harmful drugs or substances that cause illnesses and death. The fact that the cigarette drug is pleasurable to so many of us should not distinguish it from other health factors whose toll on lives and health of people have been medically and scientifically established. And since secondary smoking is just as harmful to non-smokers, especially children, as primary smoking to smokers, there are legal basis to protect the public from the dangers of smoking by increasing the restrictions on the manufacture and sale of tobacco products.

There is no doubt in my mind that the additional American steps against the tobacco industry will set the tone for the rest of the international community sooner than later. The U.S. has been setting standards on health for many generations and Western Europe will follow suit as they have always done in the past. The stage is therefore set for combating smoking globally as the arguments for free choice loses credibility each day against the increasing evidence about the harmful effects of smoking. Governments would increasingly feel constrained to step in to protect the unsuspecting public from health hazards that not only costs lives but also has a phenomenal price tag on the economic level. This also means that we in Jordan will have to take judicial notice of what the Americans have set

into motion against cigarettes and start doing something ourselves to protect our people from the obvious hazards of direct and secondary smoking. Above all, President Clinton's crusade against making cigarettes available to minors should spur us to bridge the alarming gap between our rhetoric against smoking in public places and the reality on the Jordanian scene.

There are some shocking revelations about the real stance of Jordan on cigarettes that would make a mockery of our pious protestations against smoking in general and our lip adherence to the proposition that smoking is truly hazardous to people's health. The bottom line, as far as Jordan is concerned, is its real position on the cultivation of tobacco in some of our most prime farm lands. It is a well-known fact that some 29,000 dunums from some of our most fertile agricultural lands are licensed by the Ministry of Finance for growing tobacco. It is also a well-known fact that the government pays tobacco growers two thirds of the price of their tobacco products, which is sold to the tobacco companies. The tobacco companies pay only one third of the price. The state decision to seemingly subsidise the growing of tobacco is not, though, without economic merits. What the government pays by one hand recollects many times over by the other hand as revenues and levies on cigarettes. It is estimated that the coffers of the government collect some JD 100 million from levies on cigarette packages in return for less than one tenth of the amount that it pays directly to tobacco growers. Farmers, who raise tobacco on their farm lands, receive a meagre percentage of the selling value of the end product. Meanwhile, farm lands devoted to tobacco growing is rendered useless for other agricultural cultivations for many years after the growing of tobacco because tobacco is so taxing on land it leaves it with little remaining capacity for other agricultural use.

To control and administer the "official" and "private" businesses in the tobacco industry, we have in place a law

on tobacco that dates back to 1926. This legislation was amended twice since that time but the last time it was reviewed was in 1960 well before we also joined the bandwagon against cigarette smoking. We also have a fund to encourage the cultivation of tobacco which also dates back before the shocking disclosures about the dangers of smoking. The basis of this fund also appear inconsistent not only with the international trends but also the recommendations and decisions of the government, including the Ministry of Health. The licensing of some 70 new coffee shops in recent times in Amman itself where young people smoke the "agila" as a symbol of the latest craze in smoking style is a vivid example of the existing inconsistencies in our national policy on smoking. The smoking of "hubble bubble" is well-known to be much worse than cigarette smoking as each head of tobacco equals 10 cigarettes and when the argila tobacco is "sweetened," as it is now fashionable to do, the damage to health doubles.

In appears to me that we need to review our laws and practices on the use of tobacco so that they may become more uniform in purpose. Above all, we need to be more faithful to our protestations against smoking by putting our various acts on the subject together in a coherent and rational manner. It so happens that the right to life supersedes all other rights since without life no man or woman or child can enjoy other pursuits of happiness. Cigarette manufacturers and smokers would, of course, defend the right of people to exercise free choice in this context by deciding for themselves what is good and what is not for their own health. Maybe we all can buy the argument that people have a right to "kill" themselves by drinking or smoking or whatever. What we must not accept is the right of such people to destroy the health of others, especially children within their households and non-smokers in public places. Children and non-smokers need protection and that is why we must take bolder steps to safeguard them from the reckless lifestyles of others.

Unshakeable stand

IRAQ'S ASSURANCES on Saturday that it wants to maintain and develop its "fraternal relations" with Jordan came as yet another evidence that economic and trade relations between the two countries will not suffer in the wake of the defection to the Kingdom of a number of high-ranking officials on Aug. 8. These assurances, which coincided with Jordan's assertion that it will not jeopardise its vital trade relations with Iraq, reflect the two countries' understanding of the common economic interests that bind them.

As Jordan depends on Iraq for its oil supplies and the marketing of about 20 per cent of its exports, Baghdad fully understands that the Kingdom is its only outlet to the outside world. The interdependence of the two states is simply too strong to allow for any arbitrary severing of ties between them.

But economic considerations are not the only reason why Amman and Baghdad are unlikely to replace cooperation with enmity. Strategic, political and humanitarian factors argue against such a turn of the tides.

Jordan's public opinion has shown its opposition to any deterioration of relations with Iraq. And the Kingdom's record during the Gulf war speaks volumes for this country's ability to stand firm against any sort of pressure that targets a shift from the principles that guide its foreign policy, especially towards Arab countries.

Jordan has suffered a great deal from attempts to meddle in its internal affairs. But it never compromised on its principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries.

When it comes to Iraq, His Majesty King Hussein has said "our position is frank and clear" in its firm stand and in its support for the Iraqi people and for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Iraq.

Jordan believes that the road to a better future for the Iraqis, Jordanians and all Arabs passes through the institutionalisation of a democratic political system that upholds human rights and the freedoms of the governed. But it equally believes that each people have the right to choose what kind of life they want to lead. All that Jordan can do is offer help to those who seek it. So far, Jordan has done what it could to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people, often at a high price to ourselves. Those who suggest that our future policies could be different are either simply ignorant of the guiding principles of this country, or choose to do so out of motivations that are concerned with neither Jordan's or Iraq's interests.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT WAS only out of diplomatic courtesy that the Jordanian government declared Saturday that Jordan is under no pressure from any party, but everyone knows for sure that Jordan has been exposed to pressure for years, said Tareq Masarweh, a writer in Al Ra'i Sunday. The writer said that Jordan can by no means stop its trade with Iraq, adding that those demanding that it must, should first study the U.N. Charter, which provides for compensation to a country whose economy is harmed as a result of the sanctions. Referring to other countries around Iraq, the writer said Turkey maintains open borders and open trade with Iraq, while Iran continues to barter Iraqi oil with various goods. What the Americans want is to force Jordan, the only Arab country with open borders with Iraq, to sever all links with the Iraqi people and wants to see Arabs humiliating Arabs and so keep the Arab Nation in total disarray and fragmentation. The writer said that Jordan realises the magnitude of the disaster that had befallen the region and the plight of the Iraqi people and it strives to alleviate their sufferings. He said Jordanians cannot sell out their Arab identity for any price.

A WRITER in Al Ra'i daily said that the number of statements issued by officials concerning the guest workers and unemployment over the past years is equal to the number of non-Jordanians working in the Kingdom. Ahmad Al Misleh said that mere statements solve no problem, especially the problem of unemployment and the question of the presence of tens of thousands of non-Jordanians working illegally in the country. Blaming the Ministry of Labour for the disorganisation of the local labour market, the writer said that the ministry is succumbing to the influence and the wishes of the employers and failing in its duty to stem the presence of the non-Jordanian workers, who are doing jobs that can be taken by Jordanians. The writer said that the Labour Ministry, which issues work permits, employers, who prefer non-Jordanian low-wage earners over local workers, are responsible for the confusion which has been causing real harm to the nation's interests. The writer called on the Labour Ministry to conduct a survey of the labour market and familiarise itself with its real needs. Based on the result of the survey, he said, the ministry can introduce training courses to qualify local workers for the jobs available in the local labour market.



M. KAHIL

Iran's Afghans going home, at last

By Liesl Graz

WITHIN THE next few months, the last of the Afghan refugees who have been in Iran for over 15 years should have returned home. At least that is what the Iranian government — and quite a lot of the Iranian people — hope. With the start of the school holidays, the trickle going back is turning into a steady stream. At the main crossing point at Dogharun on the road from Mashhad to Herat, the head-count had shot up from 400 per day to over 1,500 by the end of June. By now, only about 550,000 remain of the more than 3 million Afghans that Iran took in after the Soviet invasion. Half a million or so Iraqis who fled — or were expelled from — southern Iraq are still there; most of the Iraqi Kurds have returned to the fragile autonomy back home.

The Afghans are not exactly being expelled — at least not most of them — but they are being firmly encouraged to go. The rules were spelled out in a tripartite agreement signed between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Iranian government and the government of Afghanistan, such as it is. The UNHCR, which was never, in fact, really responsible for the refugees in Iran, has accepted the task of "facilitating" their return. That means it will see that the firmness doesn't get out of hand (and talking firmly to the authorities at the upper echelons when it does), coordinating transport with the International Organisation for Migration, which is actually supplying the lorries and buses to get people back. UNHCR distributes a small "exit package" (\$25 and 50 kg of wheat per person, plus one large plastic sheet, to serve as a temporary shelter if necessary, per family), as each group goes across.

In fact many of the Afghans living in Mashhad and its surroundings need no help. Lorry-owners are making small fortunes hir-

ing out vehicles to families returning home with the household goods acquired after long years of residence in Golshar — one of Mashhad's Afghan neighbourhoods — or elsewhere. Theoretically they are not supposed to be taking with them such highly negotiable items as guns or barrels of heavily subsidised petrol, but the border guards are usually too busy looking at papers to have time poking into the nether regions of the trucks.

Iran was remarkable in its generosity to the refugees from Afghanistan. In contrast to Pakistan, which cleverly parlayed its help into hundreds of millions of dollars of international funds, Iran, considered an international pariah, got no aid and almost no recognition for its pains. Nor, in those difficult early years of the Islamic Republic, did it seek any Iranian officials concerned have figured that each refugee has cost the country on average \$4 per day; multiplied by 365 days, for 15 years and an average of about 2.5 to 3 million people, the figure becomes astronomical.

Taking in neighbours

Taking in neighbours caught in an invasion by a godless regime was considered a normal way to show Islamic charity. In contrast, again, to Pakistan, the Afghans were not concentrated into camps, but free to settle where they wanted, get the jobs they could, live as they would. There was never, either, the same degree of military or even diplomatic activity; many of the Afghans are Shiites but by no means all. To be fair, the arrival of the Afghans was useful just when so many Iranian men were mobilised to fight. Afghans had been coming across the border ever since such a thing existed to work in the pistachio plantations and on construction sites; what was new was that now they came with women and children and all their chattels.

With the fall of the Najibullah government after the departure of the Soviet troops in 1991, all that changed. From an Iranian point of view, the justification for sheltering the refugees was gone. If the Afghans wanted to fight it out among their warlords and militias, each claiming to be more Islamic than their rivals, that was their problem, and no longer that of the Iranians. The Islamic principle of dispensing charity where it is needed is more important in Tehran than the formal conventions of international law.

There was also an economic component. In early 1991, about 1.6 million Afghan refugees remained in Iran and over the next months the perception changed from that of neighbours in need to that of foreign parasites eating subsidised bread, using subsidised petrol, taking up free places in schools and hospitals. As in other places of the world, the population began to see the refugees as taking work from the locals, although (again as elsewhere) they were mostly filling jobs that the Iranians no longer wanted to do, or at least not at the salary on offer, accepting an average of 7,000 rials per day (\$2.30 in June), while employers would have to pay Iranians at least 10,000 rials for the same work. The Afghans also became scapegoats, accused of every crime and misdemeanour, especially in Khorasan, the rich border province of which Mashhad is the capital. The governor of Khorasan, Ismael Mofidi, has declared that his province should become "refugee free": Tehran is more than 1,000 km to the west and Mofidi wields a remarkable amount of independent power.

The Taliban conundrum

The UNHCR and the Afghan government were able to persuade the Iranians to extend permits long enough to let people get back without overwhelming the fragile infras-

tructure in those parts of Afghanistan from which they came. Just how fragile that is can be seen in Herat, the closest city to Mashhad, where a strong local governor, Ismael Khan, has managed to impose peace for the last two years, a peace threatened last autumn when large waves of returning refugees arrived in one fell swoop. The U.N. (which has not been as active in Afghanistan as it might have been) has used the region of Herat as a proving-ground for the idea of small-scale projects, cisterns for rainwater collection and the like, which could show results immediately, but there are not very many actually functioning. Then, early this year, the Taliban, those highly organised bands of "Islamic students" sweeping from Pakistan, burst onto the scene and directly threatened Herat. The Iranians, who at first considered their campaign with some benevolence, later changed their tune. They declared the Taliban a menace to their own national security, made common cause with the governor of Herat and agreed to regulate the flow of returning refugees so as not to overwhelm his province.

One immediate result was that the permits of many Afghans were extended until after the end of school year. Others are trying to get exemptions on the grounds of having to finish court cases — particularly between tenants and landlords — or medical treatment. But now, when an Afghan is caught having overstayed his permit by even one day, he may be thrown into one of the less pleasant detention camps that have been set up outside Mashhad. Only for a short-time, of course. The purpose of the detention, it would seem, is to deter others. The Iranians also hope that it will be strong enough to keep too many Afghans from sneaking back across the wide-open border for a second try.

Middle East International

LETTERS

Telephones should not be abused

To the Editor:

IN AN ARTICLE written in the Al Ra'i Arabic daily recently, Tareq Masarweh addressed the inefficiency of using the telephone, thus causing unnecessary frustration and needless squandering of resources resulting in work without pecuniary rewards. Only through practice of the proper use of the phone, he said, can a citizen reach sound decisions in the crises he has to face on a daily basis.

In the absence of speed to impart urgent information, businesses cease to function. The omnipresence of telephones indicate that most people fail to pay attention to their proper use. Certain rules should be observed by all users of the telephone, and overall efficiency should be the guiding principle.

The telephone is the "most direct" link. Its accurate and correct use conveys an impression of efficiency, self-confidence and pleasant manner. Every telephone call is an opportunity to enhance your company's reputation. A pleasant and smiling voice has a peculiar fascination.

Planning a telephone call not only saves time and money, but it also relieves the caller and the dialed person from embarrassment. If the message delivered is not expressed in straightforward language and in historical sequence, the result is usually confusing. Planning the time of the call will prevent unpardonable intrusion upon the dialed person's privacy.

Under no circumstances keep callers holding the line or hanging on until a file is located. If it takes time to exchange an item of information, call back when the information is available.

If speed and promptness represent acme of perfection, the fax service can transfer instantaneous written and graphic messages as quickly as voice signals. Only matters which can be transmitted relatively quickly should be dealt with on the telephone.

The telephone network revolutionised communications in the business world in particular. Every effort should be exerted to cease and desist time consuming and wasting, chat or gossip on the phone. Attach no importance to what seems trivial events.

George N. Saig,
Amman.

'Editing versus censorship'

To The Editor:

I AM writing to you well aware that this letter is not going to be published. I certainly read with great delight my letter to you: U.N. role questioned, published on August 6.

I admit that I had great respect and regard for the Jordan Times. But I certainly did not expect my letter to be censored in such a manner. The U.N. and its agencies are international in nature, and lack of commending its role is a criticism to the whole international community and not to one person or government.

Censoring my letter does not change facts, but, as a student of politics, it gave me an idea of the concept of "editing" in the democratic age Jordan is witnessing. My letter to you, as published, read completely different, the basic meaning regarding the issue of breastfeeding has been completely distorted. I do not think that whoever censored it misunderstood the humour in it, and thus twisted it.

I sincerely see no reason why the Jordan Times should take up the banner of banning any factual comments that our Jordanian females in the villages and in the camps are voicing out regarding the effectiveness of U.N. agencies. The U.N. itself is passing a phase of self-criticism in order to vitalise its role.

Lamia Nasser,
Amman.

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DAY, AUGUST 21, 1995
By Dr. Waleed Saif

Features

Back to Chongqing: A mother's memories of World War II in China

By Charlene L. Fu
The Associated Press

A Beijing-based correspondent for The Associated Press travelled with her mother this summer to Chongqing, also known as Chungking, in southwestern China. It was her mother's first visit in a half-century to the city that was her family home during China's tumultuous war years.

OF ALL the changes that have occurred in this former war capital of China, my mother most mourns the lotus pond and willow trees of her primary school. Today, the schoolyard is barren and colourless: A field of yellow earth ringed by a few scrubbed trees, a swing set at one end and a basketball hoop at the other.

Mom was 10 years old when World War II ended in 1945 and had spent almost six years in Chongqing, a large city on the Yangtze River in southwest China's Sichuan province.

Displaced by war, she lived in many cities before the family fled the communist takeover in 1949. But Chongqing was her home for the longest.

My sister and I grew up listening to mom's stories of her childhood during what the Chinese call the anti-Japanese war.

While my friends were hearing stories about their parents growing up on family farms or having teenage crushes on Elvis, my mother was telling us about days spent hiding in air-raid shelters or fleeing on roads packed with war refugees.

She was 3 when the family fled to Chongqing from the eastern coastal city of Nanjing, where my grandfather was a university lecturer.

The ruling nationalist government, badly beaten by invading Japanese, had retreated from its capital in Nanjing to this inland city. Many universities also moved.

Chongqing is surrounded by mountains on all sides, and the main river access is through the Yangtze river's treacherous three gorges.

The mountains and rivers were natural defences against invading Japanese troops. But the city was vulnerable from the air. My mother's earliest memory is of a Japanese bombing one day when her parents were away.

"I was so frightened I crawled under my father's

desk," she remembers.

There were wartime privations. The first day of school, there were no desks. Students brought chairs from home to use as desks.

Despite the war, my mother remembers a fairly normal family life. The children attended classes and holidays were celebrated.

One of her fondest memories was after-dinner storytelling. My grandmother, one of the few Chinese women of her time to be educated in things Western, transported her children to Shakespearean England with tales based on the classic plays.

But dinner was often interrupted by air-raid sirens. Everyone would grab a handful of rice to knead into rice balls and eat later in the bomb shelters, damp caves carved out of the mountains.

"It was dark," she says. "The children would be too afraid to make a sound. We would hear the adults talk about incidents like the one at Lianglukou." There thousands died when bombs caused an avalanche that blocked up the entrance of a huge air-raid shelter.

"That would just increase our anxiety," my mother says. "We grew up with no sense of security."

In 1942, my grandfather moved the family to the neighbouring province of Hunan, 660 kilometres to the southeast, where he became manager of a cigarette factory. With the move, life took a turn for the worse. There were air raids, and no mountain caves to hide in.

"We'd be woken up in

the middle of the night and run out and hide under a bridge, or in the gullies between the fields," mother remembers. "Or just lie down flat in the middle of the field."

Hunan was in the path of the Japanese army's 1944 summer offensive. With rumours of approaching troops, the family decided to flee.

Their first stop was Guilin, now a major tourist draw with its picturesque mountains. The only place to live was in a barn near the Li River. But the children, who had no school to attend, delighted in playing in the river and catching tadpoles.

When Japanese troops neared Guilin, the family was among the lucky ones who got seats on an overcrowded train. The less-fortunate sat on the roofs of the cars or tied wooden planks underneath and lay there.

"You never knew when the train would stop or stop — there was never a signal," my mother recalls. "If you were on top and fell asleep, you'd fall off when the train started. Sometimes if the train was going too fast, the rope holding your plank might break and you'd die."

"At the places the train stopped, there might not be any food. One time, my mother and I went into the field looking for potatoes or anything to eat. Suddenly the train started up fortunately, it wasn't going too fast and we were able to scramble on."

There were other close calls. Japanese planes bombed the train engine and caboose, killing hun-

dreds. But the compartment my mother and her family were in was untouched.

When they broke their journey to stay overnight in a guest house, wanting to wash up and get a decent meal, Japanese bombers came again. The family fled outdoors and watched the building go up in flames.

When my grandfather fell ill with typhoid, the family had to stop running. They were out of money and had only a bag of high-quality tobacco from the cigarette factory.

The six of them lived in a single room and cooked in a tin washbasin. My mother contracted malaria and my grandmother somehow managed to find quinine pills. My grandfather lost so much weight that he scarcely looked human.

The children were sent into the streets to peddle the family's books and clothes. They were too young to understand just how desperate their situation was.

"We thought it was pretty fun," my mother recalls. And still the Japanese advanced. Rumours spread that even the rats were fleeing.

Waiting for my grandfather to recover, the family was among the last to leave the only place to go was back to Chongqing.

There was no rail or boat transport through the mountains. So my grandmother, a proud woman, got down on her hands and knees and begged for permission for her family to ride atop army transport trucks.

Luckily, she and the local commanding officer, a

General Tu were both from the same close-knit group of northern Chinese who had migrated south. He took pity on her.

The family was allowed to bring only two bedrolls, but the trucks were piled high with goods belonging to the army families, including their commodities.

My still-weak grandfather sat next to the driver, but the rest of the family rode atop the piles, clinging to the ropes.

A sea of refugees filled the roads, some on foot, others riding animals, all fleeing.

The army trucks were fueled by charcoal and staled frequently. The soldiers wanted to separate the family, putting my mother's older brother and sister on another truck, but my grandmother refused. That truck later caught fire and exploded.

As the caravan climbed into the mountains, the weather got colder. Snows forced them to stop in the provincial capital where the family stayed in a storage room.

When the trucks set out again, they had chains on their tires. But they were forced to stop again for several weeks to wait for the ice to melt. The only place the family could find to stay was next to a pigsty.

The most grueling part of the trip was "72-Turn Road," so named for its hairpin turns down the mountains. At one sharp turn, my mother's younger sister started to fall out of the truck, but somehow my grandmother caught her and dragged her back in.

When the family made it back to Chongqing in early

1945, my mother recalls, "the first thing we did was to boil all our clothes." Everyone was flea-infested.

The war was in its last month, and shortages were acute. The children had no shoes. Their clothes were so old and bleached by repeated washings that they were white.

Breakfast was thin rice gruel; lunch, a bowl of rice full of sand and pebbles. There was no electricity, and the family used oil lamps. Homework had to be done before the sun went down. Then, suddenly, it was all over.

"It was dusk, after dinner. I don't remember exactly how we heard, but everyone knew," mother says. "My sister and I and our cousin danced all night long, we were so happy. The entire city of Chongqing just went crazy."

My grandmother bought leftover U.S. army supplies, including American jam, and the children had the novelty of eating toast and jam for breakfast.

My grandfather left almost immediately for a job with a Shanghai trading company. But it was six months before the rest of the family was able to secure passage on a steamer down the Yangtze river to Shanghai.

The family later went to Hong Kong, then to Indonesia, where my mother attended high school, and later to Taiwan, where my mother attended college. She and my father settled permanently in the United States in 1969, living most of the time in Rochester, New York.

On our recent return visit to China, my mother and I

arrived in Chongqing with no addresses, no one to look up. The night we flew in, all my mother could remember was that from the front door of the family home halfway up a mountain slope, she could see the juncture of the Yangtze and Jialing rivers that run along either side of central Chongqing.

But the next morning, looking at a map, she began to recognise place names and was able to pick out the district where she used to live.

Her main goal was to find her primary school, which she remembered as being at the top of the mountain, above her home.

"It is the only place that carries good memories. Everywhere else, we were fleeing the war and the bombings," she said.

We hired a hotel car for the day and set off. As we got closer, she started to softly chant the place names: "Tu Mountain. I remember Tu Mountain. Longmenhao. I remember Longmenhao."

The driver had never come this way before. After much discussion, backtracking and circling we headed down a steep narrow road so crowded with peasants selling vegetables that the car could barely squeeze past.

The road ended abruptly just above the riverbank and mom recognised her first sight: The dock from which the family used to board ferries for the city centre.

"What happened to all the sand that we used to play in?" she wondered as we got out of the car.

We knew we were in the

right place when we start climbing the worn stone steps that lead to the mountaintop. Turning around to look back, we could see the two rivers: The brown muddy Yangtze mixing with the green, clearer Jialing.

In the hot sun and Chongqing's near-100 per cent humidity, my sister and I soon tired of the steep climb. But my mother, more energetic than she'd been in days, set a brisk pace.

She spotted an old, white-haired woman, and to my amazement spoke to her in the local dialect, asking if there was a school nearby. I never knew she could speak Sichuanese.

The old woman gave us directions, and we continued our climb. Cresting the peak, we entered a schoolyard. My mother took a swift look around and sighed heavily. In a voice laden with disappointment, she said softly, "it's all changed."

She waved a hand toward the slope and said, "none of these buildings were here then. The mountains used to be so much prettier."

A young schoolteacher took us to a colleague's home where several older teachers and the headmistress were having lunch. They confirmed that the school was the one that my mother attended.

They told mom that the willow trees were cut down in the 1950s and used as fuel during a misguided nationwide campaign to build backyard furnaces to produce steel.

In the 1970s, the lotus pond was filled in so children wouldn't drown in it.

Later, my mother recalls that when the family returned to Chongqing after months fleeing the Japanese advance, it was she, not the school, that had changed.

"I was a completely different person. Before, I had had a very happy childhood." Her voice breaks. "But because of fleeing the war and my illness, I couldn't play on the swings anymore. Before, I could swing really, really high."

Ekeus says Iraq gave data

(Continued from page 1)

Asked if the new atmosphere could lead to lifting the U.N. ban on oil exports imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990, he said: "How the political development will be played, it is very difficult to say. I do not know how that will play at the Security Council."

Mr. Ekeus said he would inform the U.N. Security Council of the latest revelations and submit his six-monthly report by Oct. 10 or 11.

He said he doubted the council could take a decision on sanctions by the time of its regular review in September because his experts would not have finished analysing the data.

Earlier on Sunday, Iraq denied any unusual movement of its troops and said it was ready to fight if attacked by U.S. forces assembling in the Gulf region.

"Iraq is prepared for any possibility and would fight on all fronts with extraordinary power," the official English-language daily Baghdad Observer said in an editorial.

It said there was no truth to U.S. claims that Iraq was moving troops to attack its neighbours Jordan and Kuwait.

The United States has sent aircraft carriers to the region within striking distance of Iraq and advanced the date of regular joint exercises with Kuwait to discourage what it

describes as menacing movement by Iraqi armed forces.

Another Iraqi official meanwhile accused Gen. Hassan of fleeing Baghdad with \$35 million.

In remarks published in Amman on Sunday, Iraqi Information Minister Hamed Yousef Hammadi also hinted that Gen. Hassan should not be allowed to use Jordan as a base for political activity against Iraq.

"Husseini Kamel took with him \$35 million, the local daily Al Aswaq quoted Mr. Hammadi as telling a group of Jordanian journalists visiting Baghdad at his ministry's invitation.

"We are not against that Jordan grants asylum to anyone because these are part of genuine Arab traditions and norms," Mr. Hammadi was quoted by the Al Rai daily as saying.

"But there is a difference between a defector who adheres to the norms the world knows in terms of not practising any political activity and a defector doing so," he added.

Gen. Hammadi also said he hoped an improvement in Jordan's ties with Arab Gulf states would not come at the expense of ties with Baghdad.

Kuwait wants Gen. Hassan to help find missing Kuwaitis believed held by Iraq since its 1990-91 occupation but is not raising hopes of an early breakthrough from a man it calls a war criminal.

Iraq planned invasion -- defector

(Continued from page 1)

gical, chemical and nuclear weapons development. (see story below).

Gen. Hassan said: "The regime has released all the secrets of its weapons programme... the aim was to protect their grip on power after

Arafat insists on full deal

(Continued from page 1)

police in Gaza City on Friday.

Israeli officials sealed off Gaza on Aug. 10.

"What you're saying about Wael Nassar does not interest the worker. The worker is only interested in his life, his financial situation," said Mohammad Asour who was waiting to cross into Israel.

Colonel Radwan Abu Al Qumsan, the PLO's head of security at the Erez crossing, told Reuters only around 6,000 of the 10,000 Palestinians with permits to work in Israel left Gaza. The rest stayed home on the assumption they needed new permits to enter Israel.

Israel began renewing entry permits last week but has issued only a few thousand new magnetic cards needed to cross into the Jewish state.

But Israeli officials said on Sunday the old permits were still valid and Palestinians whose magnetic cards had not been renewed could still enter for work in Israel.

U.S. Bosnia mission to return

(Continued from page 1)

going on to the United States.

The dead included Robert Frasure, 53, special envoy on former Yugoslavia, Joseph Kruliz, 50, deputy assistant secretary of defence, and Air Force Colonel Samuel Nelson Drew, 47.

The wounded were Peter Hargraves, regional security officer at the U.S. embassy in Sarajevo, and army Lieutenant-Colonel Daniel Gerstein of the Defence Department.

They had been touring capitals and were on their way to brief Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic on the American plan.

Jordan, Israel sign accord

(Continued from page 1)

lies across southern towns of the Kingdom.

Jordan and Israel will also connect their national power grids. Work on a preliminary link in the Aqaba-Eilat area is already under way. This connection will allow Israel to use extra power generated at the Aqaba Thermal Power Plant for use at its considerably large tourism infrastructure at Eilat, including hotels and other facilities.

However, the major connection between the power grids will be in the central region and is expected to take some time

No change in Iran deal -- Botha

(Continued from page 12)

perception amongst members of parliament that the United States was bullying South Africa into backing policy positions, Mr. Botha said: "No, I don't agree with that. It's just their style, it's their way of doing things."

"This country is a giant, no matter how you read things and we had better find ways to work with that giant," he said.

Mr. Botha said the state-owned Strategic Fuel Fund (SFF) would soon sign the agreement to store up to 15 million barrels of Iranian oil in tanks built at Saldanha Bay, north of Cape Town, as part of an apartheid-era operation to evade oil sanctions.

A president in trouble

By Annie Huang
The Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan — The tension between Taiwan and China is proving a bumpy political ride for President Lee Teng-hui with the approach of presidential elections next March.

Just two months ago, basking in the triumph of being the first Taiwanese president to visit the United States, Mr. Lee looked like a shoo-in.

But China, angry at the behaviour of an island it claims as a renegade province, has retaliated for Mr. Lee's visit by suspending talks with Taiwan and conducting menacing missile tests near Taiwanese waters.

Now, some analysts are speculating that relations will not get back on track as long as Mr. Lee is in office, and this has prompted a guessing game about whether he will run in the election.

Mr. Lee is expected to make his plans public at a congress of his Nationalist Party on Tuesday and Wednesday.

At 72, after seven years as president, the grandfatherly Lee enjoys high popularity as the man who gave his people democracy, and until recently it was widely assumed that he would run and win comfortably.

That assumption was strengthened as Taiwanese swelled with pride at seeing Lee address Cornell University, his alma mater.

But things have since gone seriously wrong.

China viewed the low-key, unofficial trip as an attempt to make capitalist Taiwan independent from the communist mainland.

Its first move was to freeze its semi-official talks with Taiwan. Next, it embarked on a series of missile tests in waters off the island, disrupting Taiwan's air and sea links and badly rattling its finances.

Much as they relish Lee's effort to lift them out of the diplomatic limbo imposed by China, few Taiwanese want to go to war about it.

Mr. Lee's "greatest difficulty at the moment seems to be having offended Beijing," Bernard T.K. Jooi, a retired ambassador and professor of political science at Chinese Culture University, wrote in the China Post.

"The reasoning goes that, if President Lee were to serve another term, the Chinese mainland could hold military exercises every day in its waters near Taiwan and Taiwan's economy would be affected and its society destabilised," he wrote.

Jooi speculated that Mr. Lee might yield his candidacy to Premier Lien Chan as the surest way of keeping the presidency in the hands of the Nationalist Party and fending off the opposition Democratic Progressive Party, whose advocacy of outright independence is sure to stoke Beijing's wrath even further.

Many suspect that this is precisely Beijing's intention — to intimidate Taiwan into replacing Mr. Lee with someone more amenable.

Mr. Lee insists he's not pushing for independence, and that he supports reunification with China. But his conservative opponents have seized the opportunity to accuse him of driving a wedge between Taiwan and the Chinese mainland.

More than 10,000 marched in Taipei streets Sunday, chanting "Lee step down" and calling him "the root of our nation's chaos and crisis."

Lee already faces two challengers from within his Nationalist party. The latest is the respected Chen Li-An, head of the watchdog control Yuan, who declared his candidacy on Thursday, citing deteriorating relations with China and saying: "Things have never been so bad before."

IAF assails joint exercises

(Continued from page 12)

"Why would America manoeuvre with Egyptian forces on the Red Sea near Sudan? Why the exercises here on the borders with Iraq? And what does the presence of aircraft carriers in Haifa and Aqaba mean?" the IAF said in the statement.

The joint military manoeuvres took place in the southern parts of the Kingdom where Jordan shares no borders with Iraq. There has been no news of an American aircraft carrier in Aqaba either.

The IAF, which has 17 members in the Lower House of Parliament, rejected American suggestions that

Iraq could be posing a military threat to the Kingdom, adding that "we do not need (U.S. President Bill) Clinton's protection."

The motives behind the American suggestion, said the statement, is to sever ties between Jordan and Iraq, whose "land and people were destroyed by the American army."

IAF deputies had warned the government against following Washington's line in its policy towards Iraq. The government has asserted that its policies on Iraq are determined by its national interests and that it is under no pressure to take any hostile moves against Baghdad.

Iraq has also said that it wants to maintain good relations with the Kingdom.

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Kuwait budget fails to win assembly approval

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti government budget proposals failed to win parliamentary passage Saturday amid angry opposition demands that ministers submit a long-term plan to cut the deficit.

MPs voted 21-0 in favour of the budget but 17 abstentions meant the measure failed to win the minimum 31 votes required for passage.

Another vote will be taken at the assembly's next session on Tuesday.

The abstentions, in effect blocking passage of the bill, appeared in response to opposition demands the government first propose detailed ideas for ending the deficit in coming years.

"We are sounding the alarm bell, at least to clear our consciences before God and the society," said Ismail Al Shatti, an opposition Islamist chairman of the assembly's financial and economic affairs committee.

"Suspend the budget and embarrass the government before the society," he urged MPs before the vote.

Economists say persistent deficits that soared after Kuwait's 1991 Gulf war liberation from Iraqi occupation are slowly eating away Kuwait's main investment reserve, now around \$35 billion and down from around \$100 billion pre-war.

The deficit issue goes to the heart of national security, Kuwait's number one concern, because the country's ability to pay foreign allies to come to its defence would be the critical factor in any future emergency such as Iraq's 1990 invasion.

The government wants spending 4.23 billion dinars (\$13.8 billion) and projects revenue of 2.910 billion dinars (\$9.6 billion), leaving a gap of 1.32 billion dinars (\$4.4 billion), equivalent to almost a fifth of gross domestic product.

Finance Minister Nasser Al Rodhan promised to table by the end of 1995 a five-year plan about the state-dominated economy including the deficit.

Japan's trade surplus drops sharply in July

TOKYO (R) — Japan's huge trade surplus shrank sharply in July as the strong yen started to take its toll on exports, surprising economists and boosting the dollar against the yen.

The finance ministry said that Japan's overall customs-cleared trade surplus narrowed to \$9.43 billion in July from \$12.25 billion in the same month a year earlier.

"I was very, very surprised because it (the trade surplus) was exactly at the lowest forecast," said Makoto Kojima, director of global markets at Barclays Bank.

July's overall trade surplus was just below the bottom end of the range of economists' forecasts, which went from \$9.5 billion to \$12.2 billion.

Economists said the size of the fall in the July trade surplus was an incentive for buying dollars against the yen.

Economists expect the politically sensitive trade imbalance will continue to decrease.

"Japan's trade surplus is on a declining trend, with the effect of the yen's rise starting to depress the volume of exported products," said Takumi Tsunoda, an economist at Yamaichi Research Institute of Securities and Economics Inc.

Many economists agreed the yen's rise against other currencies, especially the dollar, this year has weakened Japanese products' competitiveness abroad. A strong yen makes Japanese goods less attractive in overseas markets by inflating their dollar-based prices.

But Japan's exports are not expected to fall sharply because other countries may keep buying Japanese products as their economies are recovering, economists said.

Asian countries, for example, are expected to purchase capital goods from Japan despite the fact that the strong yen is boosting prices, said Yamaichi's Tsunoda.

Economists said Japan's exports to the United States are also unlikely to shrink dramatically, although the July figure of \$10.34 billion marked the first fall in 32 months.

The finance ministry said Japan's trade surplus with the United States, its biggest trading partner, marked the second straight fall in July, shrinking to \$3.87 billion from \$5.62 billion a year earlier.

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Many economists agreed the yen's rise against other currencies, especially the dollar, this year has weakened Japanese products' competitiveness abroad. A strong yen makes Japanese goods less attractive in overseas markets by inflating their dollar-based prices.

But Japan's exports are not expected to fall sharply because other countries may keep buying Japanese products as their economies are recovering, economists said.

Asian countries, for example, are expected to purchase capital goods from Japan despite the fact that the strong yen is boosting prices, said Yamaichi's Tsunoda.

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Turkish officials expect inflation to start falling

ANKARA (R) — Higher-than-expected July inflation has dimmed many Turks' hopes for lower inflation this year, but Turkey's economy officials are still confident that year-on-year inflation will decline sharply from September.

"Inflation ran at very high levels in the last four months of 1994. More reasonable rates of inflation in the same period of this year will pull down annual inflation sharply," said a treasury official, who declined to be named.

Inflation, measured with wholesale prices, rose to 80 per cent in July from 77.3 per cent in June.

Monthly inflation ran between 5.4 per cent and a high of 8.3 per cent in the last four months of last year.

But officials predict monthly average inflation will be at around four to five per cent over 1995's final quarter, citing increased imports, lessened reliance of the treasury on central bank resources, slowed down exchange rates, disciplined budget, better farm output and reductions in cost of duties.

A monthly average rise of five per cent in the period of September-December will

slow down 12-month inflation to 72.2 per cent at end-1995, higher than the end-year target of 40 per cent but sharply lower than 1994's inflation of 150 per cent.

A recent surge in domestic demand, slow privatisation, high private sector manufacturing prices — core inflation — and a real expansion in monetary aggregates may block efforts to reverse inflation, economists say.

Moreover, they fear disastrous results if Prime Minister Tansu Ciller's government eases its tight wage and agricultural price policies to increase its popularity ahead of possible early elections.

The next general elections are due in November 1996. The government can still head for early polls anytime this year but elections in 1996 are most likely, political analysts say.

The course of the nine-year-old privatisation programme will be key to the fate of inflation.

The government's end-year target for consolidated budget deficit, 206 trillion lira (\$4.5 billion), was based on a key assumption that at least 50 trillion lira (\$1.1 billion) of 1995 privatisation revenues would be transferred to the budget.

Russia issues new rules on share registers

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's Federal Securities Commission has issued new rules on share registers aimed at increasing investor confidence in the country's fledgling securities markets.

The commission said in a statement the regulations defined the duties of everyone involved in a securities transaction, including shareholders, nominee holders of securities and keepers of share registers.

Other rules deal with issuing, splitting, consolidating and cancelling securities.

They say anyone who acquires registered securities in good faith cannot be deprived of them.

The rules, which will be binding pending passage of a comprehensive securities law, seen aimed at ensuring there is no repetition of recent scandals such as secret takeovers, stock dilutions and other crude violations of shareholders' rights.

The regulations, which came into force Friday, are intended to protect shareholders' rights.

"This is the main task of our commission. All our work revolves around this activity," commission chairman Dmitry Vasiliev told Reuters in an interview.

Western investor confidence took a knock when it became known that shareholders in Russian oil company Komsomol had decided to raise the company's capital and issue new shares without consulting existing stockholders.

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Fed likely to hold U.S. interest rates steady

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Federal Reserve (Fed) encouraged by signs that the economy is on the mend, is widely expected to hold off from cutting interest rates further at a policy-making meeting Tuesday.

With inflation steady and growth picking up, analysts said the central bank has no reason to tinker with policy now after reducing rates last month for the first time in nearly three years.

"They should be content," said Robert Dederick, chief economist at Chicago-based Northern Trust Co. "There is no need to rush into another rate move."

Only two of 30 economists and Wall Street analysts surveyed by Reuters expect the central bank's policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) to decide on a rate cut Tuesday.

Since the Fed trimmed short-term interest rates by a quarter percentage point on July 6, the economy has generally been looking better.

Housing starts racked up their biggest gain in over a year last month, rising 6.7 per cent on the back of lower interest rates and cheaper mortgages.

The jobs market has shown some signs of improvement. Fewer Americans are filing claims for jobless benefits and employment is up so far this summer.

And the dollar has strengthened. That should help hold down prices of imported goods and keep inflation in check.

But not all the news has been upbeat. Car sales remain weak, and that's a cause for some concern because the automobile industry is such a key component of the economy.

"That's the single weak link," said Cynthia Latta, an economist with Massachusetts-based consultants ORI/McGraw Hill. "But that by itself won't drag the economy down."

Most analysts — inside and outside the Fed — expect the economy to strengthen in the current quarter, after growth abruptly slowed to a mere half percent in the second quarter.

"The trough was in April," one Fed official, who declined to be named, said last week. "The economy is looking better since then."

James Glassman, an economist with Chemical Securities in New York, expects the economy to bounce back strongly in the second half of the year, notching up growth of three per cent in the third quarter and four per cent in the fourth.

Most other economists are not so upbeat and some believe the central bank will need to cut rates again before the year is out to give the economy a helping hand.

But don't expect that to happen this week.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

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Cuban GDP declines by 34% since 1989

HAVANA (R) — Newly revealed statistics on the Cuban economy show that the nation's gross domestic product (GDP) declined by 34.3 per cent since 1989, the year the communist bloc began to fall apart.

The GDP is the sum of a country's yearly output of goods and services, and is considered the most

hold U.S. steady

"That's the single link," said Cynthia L. eonomist... But that by itself won't be the economy down... Most analysts... outside the Fed... economy to strengthen... abruptly slowed to a half percent in the quarter.

The trough was in... one Fed official... week. "The economy... James Glassman... in New York... the economy to bounce... strongly in the second... of three per cent in the quarter and four per cent in the fourth.

Most other economies... not so upbeat and... believe the central bank... need to cut rates again... the year is out to give... But don't expect it... happen this week.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR DAY, AUGUST 21, 1995

By Thomas S. P. Astrologer, Carroll Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to 19) Contact higher... gain their support for... ject you have in mind... Delving into fascinating... munity matters is...

TAURUS: (April 20 to 20) There could be a... plans you have... today, but this gives... lead time to perfect... so be patient and all... out for the best.

GEMINI: (May 21 to 21) Don't be... one who is unable to... promised deadline... Show others that you... relied on to finish any...

MOON CHILDREN: (22 to July 21) Do... associates and gain... added cooperation... You'll have to exercise... in handling a... ter and you're going... the help of higher... LEO: (July 22 to August 22) You may find it... started on your... but persevere and you... a lot accomplished... and alert to all which...

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You're... able to enjoy... you've had little time... the past. You have... ideas that need... You should enjoy a...

LIBRA: (September 22 to October 22) Attend to... duties that must be... ly in the day for... Show more interest in... activities for gaining...

SCORPIO: (October 22 to November 21) You're... associates can... ent results now. You... able to communicate... well with others... are able to get your...

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Your... money situation... day and take steps to... day so you'll have... recreation later. Be... optimistic about the... for yourself and your...

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You're... ing very clearly now... easily advance in your... endeavour. Stop wast... cious time and get it... done which must be...

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Engage... fitable activities early... day so you'll have... recreation later. Be... optimistic about the... for yourself and your...

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Contact a... today who has had... to give you in the... low your intuition... ing with others and... lent results quickly.

Birthstone of August: Golden Quartz

business daily beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Italian firm wins JD 35 million road project

☆ SOCIETA ITALIANA per Condotta D'acua SPA, a major Italian company, won the tender to build the Ras Al Naqab-Aqaba highway at a cost of JD 35 million. The minister of public works and housing said the work will start within the coming two months and will take three years to complete. The World Bank and the European Investment Bank are financing 70 per cent of the cost while the Jordanian treasury is covering the remaining 30 per cent. The project is 84-kilometre long, stretching 70 kilometres from Ras Al Naqab to Wadi Al Yutum and for a further 14 kilometres from Wadi Al Yutum to Aqaba (Al Ra'i).

☆ INTENSIVE CONTACTS are underway between Amman and Tokyo to obtain a grant to finance building King Hussein and Sheikh Hussein bridges. According to the minister of public works and housing, an agreement on the grant is expected over the coming two months. The minister said the two projects, estimated to cost \$25 million, include building four-lane concrete bridges with pavements as well as building a border post at the Sheikh Hussein Bridge to comprise customs and border services. The project at the border post with Israel is to include also a road that would connect the bridge with the Shouneh road. Building King Abdullah and Prince Mohammad bridges and constructing a border post on King Hussein Bridge will be among the projects to be presented to the Amman economic summit in October (Al Ra'i).

☆ MAINTENANCE of the Sweileh-Queen Alia International Airport road will begin next month and will continue for eight months at a cost of about JD 3.5 million. The maintenance would be in three stages for a total length of 38 kilometres and covering Sweileh - Eighth Circle - Al Yadoudah - Queen Alia International Airport. The maintenance was recommended by the World Bank and the British Transport Research Centre as there were many defects in the upper surface of the highway (Al Aswaj).

☆ A NEW study by the Consumer Protection Society shows that the cost of living between 1994 and 1995 has risen by 11.7. The study covered the prices of 117 essential products namely food, medicine and fuel products. Prices were found to have increased by an average 14.3 per cent per year on 78 products, to have declined on nine products and to have remained stable on 30 others. The study pointed out that out of every nine products which declined in price, five were vegetables and fruits, available in large quantities during the second quarter of the year. Two of the remaining four products were either seasonal or in irregular supply (Al Dustour).

☆ A STUDY being conducted on laying down pipelines to carry natural gas from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Qatar will be completed by end of this year, the minister of energy and mineral resources has said. The natural gas will be used to generate and provide electrical power to big industries in the first stage and to houses in the second stage. The minister said experts are seeking to use gas instead of fuel at all power stations in the Kingdom in order to maximise economic savings and maintain a clean environment. He added that national companies would be financing this national project (Al Ra'i).

Another nail in the coffin for 'Street of Shame'

LONDON (R) — Fleet Street, once the vibrant heart of Britain's newspaper business, fell silent Sunday.

Pronounced dead a decade ago when the press barons began migrating to London's Docklands and elsewhere in the hunt for cheaper high-tech operations, "the street" clung on, a shadow of its former self, with the help of news agencies and regional newspapers.

But on Sunday, the last major news organisation, the Press Association Agency (P.A.), moved its 100 reporters, photographers and management to new offices in Victoria, five kilometres away.

The P.A. says new technology, and the need to install up to date technical equipment, make its Fleet Street offices no longer suitable. Reuters' journalists once shared the building with their P.A. colleagues, but 18 months ago, the world news

and information organisation moved its editorial staff out and bought the building from P.A. as a corporate headquarters.

The P.A.'s departure leaves just a handful of people at the London offices of Scotland's Dundee Courier newspaper carrying the journalistic torch.

Courier executive Ron Paton told Reuters: "We're now the last newspaper office in Fleet Street. We're feeling a bit lonely... you don't get any journalistic gossip in the pub any more."

He added: "I feel sorry for those journalists stuck in Docklands. They're all away from the heartbeat."

The P.A. move virtually ends a tradition which began as long ago as around 1500 when printer Wynkyn de Worde rented a printing office on the south side of the street.

Close to the commercial heart of London, near parliament and within easy reach of the capital's main stations, Fleet Street was ideally situated for reporting, and every night its presses turned out nearly 16 million newspapers.

Names and careers were made in an instant in the huddle of offices, and bars, around the street.

The smell of printing ink mingled with the odour of raw ambition and the sense of history being made, invaded the dreams of young reporters across Britain.

Its nicknames — Grub Street, the Street of Shame, the Street of Adventure — bore witness to the love-hate relationship of Britain's establishment for its occupants.

Each newspaper or agency had its own watering hole, which led not to segregation but to cross-fertilisation.

Returning foreign correspondents swapped tales of derring do and there were frequent late-night brawls involving journalists, sometimes piqued by a rival's success in obtaining an exclusive "scoop."

But the kings of the street were not the journalists but the printers. Operating a closed union policy which meant jobs were reserved for a select few and entry into the ranks usually depended on kinship, they commanded huge salaries.

Boosting their income with casual shifts on Sunday papers, often signing on as Mickey Mouse or Queen Victoria to fool tax authorities, they held newspaper owners to ransom — threatening to stop publication if their demands were not met.

Media tycoon Rupert Murdoch, owner of The Times, the Sunday Times, the Sun and The News of the World, took the printers on in 1986, moving production of his titles to Wapping in London's run-down Docklands despite a bitter campaign by unions to stop him.

The new group will also have operational centres in Stockholm, Kalamazoo in Michigan — Upjohn's traditional base — and Milan.

"Through the merger, Pharmacia gains access to Upjohn's strong U.S. sales, marketing and distribution infrastructure to fully exploit the sale of Pharmacia products, while Upjohn gains additional sales and marketing support in Europe," Mr. Ekberg added.

The two companies said Pharmacia and Upjohn Inc. will be listed on London, New York and Stockholm stock exchanges and the merger would result in a higher 1996 earnings per share for both companies' shareholders. The new group will have annual turnover of around 50 billion Swedish crowns (\$6.8 billion).

Pharmacia, Upjohn to merge

STOCKHOLM (R) — Sweden's Pharmacia and Upjohn Inc. of the United States announced Sunday they will merge later this year, the latest move in a global shake-up of the pharmaceuticals industry.

The Swedish and American pharmaceutical firms said the merger was on a 50-50 basis and would create one of the world's top 10 drugs companies, with corporate headquarters in London.

The world's drugs industry is riddled with rumours of mergers and acquisitions at the moment, but the Pharmacia-Upjohn line-up had been discussed for several days. A Swedish newspaper forecast the merger on Friday.

"For both Pharmacia and Upjohn, this merger is a bold strategic move to build a highly competitive company as the worldwide pharmaceuticals industry continues to consolidate," said Pharmacia's Jan Ekberg, proposed chairman of the new group, to be called Pharmacia Upjohn Inc.

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AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET				
ORGANIZED MARKET CHASE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 20/08/1995				
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK PIC	480	105600	219.500	221.000
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	1276	5797	4.550	4.550
BANK OF JORDAN	450	1530	3.400	3.400
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	9037	11291	1.240	1.240
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	1175	2957	2.500	2.500
THE HOUSING BANK	5525	31804	5.640	5.650
JORDAN KUNAIC BANK	8915	48962	2.810	2.800
JORDAN GULF BANK	17200	19954	1.160	1.170
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	838	3157	3.770	3.770
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	1262	5116	4.050	4.080
BEIT ELKUNYAT INVESTMENT FOR HOUSING	500	1275	2.550	2.550
ARAB BANK FOR INVESTMENT	14000	14850	1.060	1.060
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	150	818	5.330	5.450
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK	5200	8308	1.610	1.600
BANKS SECTOR	66192	238103	INDEX NUMBER: 182.36	CHANGE: +0.52
UNITED INSURANCE	1000	2600	2.600	2.600
JORDAN FIRE INSURANCE	700	1850	2.700	2.700
INSURANCE SECTOR	1700	4450	INDEX NUMBER: 133.33	CHANGE: +0.002
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	23394	38290	1.610	1.630
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	450	2475	5.500	5.500
JORDAN PHARMACEUTICALS	200	1123	2.800	2.810
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	7500	16461	2.190	2.190
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & CONDOMINIUM HOTELS	1000	1220	2.230	2.220
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	1750	5600	3.180	3.200
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Women's Basketball Championship Orthodoxi, Jazireh clash tonight

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Former champions Al Jazireh Monday face titleholders Al Orthodoxi in a decisive match that will determine the eventual winner of this year's women's basketball trophy in the three-team tournament organised by the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF).

Al Orthodoxi will undoubtedly benefit by the arrival of key player Jehane Abdelnour who took time off from her work in Beirut to join her teammates. Otherwise, her team might have had a difficult task especially if Shireen Abu Khader misses the upcoming game because of the knee injury she sustained during their match against Al Ahli which the titleholders won by a mere three points 55-52.

Al Jazireh on the other hand easily beat Al Ahli 66-33 while missing five team members including two key players, Suhair Makusi and Rana Hussein. Al Jazireh currently rely on the rebounding and scoring abilities of 184 centimetre tall Jumana al Sahi. While they are without their original lineup of players who are mostly abroad, the team has its energetic playmaker Hala Al Muhaisen together with Tala Al Mauge, Rania Al



Reigning champions Al Orthodoxi — will they be able to retain their title?

Dajani and a younger lineup hoping to win back the title they clinched from Al Orthodoxi in 1993.

Al Orthodoxi, on the other hand, appeared in a surprisingly poor form in their match against Al Ahli while having most of their players including usual top scorer Lara Masri-Naber who had missed last season.

However, Al Ahli's newly regrouped team led by Andeira Kasesich surprised themselves, their opponents and attending fans by managing to keep the score close throughout the match before losing by three points.

Al Orthodoxi who dominated women's basket-

ball since its latest comeback in 1989, lost the title only in 1993 but regained it last year when Al Jazireh abruptly pulled out of the championship citing differences with the JBF while the only other competing team was Abu Nusair.

Championship record

1989
First: Orthodoxi
Second: Ahli
Third: Homentmen

1990
First: Orthodoxi
Second: Ahli
Third: Homentmen

1991
First: Orthodoxi
Second: Ahli
Third: Homentmen
Fourth: Jazireh

1992
First: Orthodoxi
Second: Ahli
Third: Jazireh
Fourth: Homentmen

1993
First: Jazireh
Second: Orthodoxi
Third: Ahli
Fourth: Abu Nusair

1994
First: Orthodoxi
Second: Abu Nusair
Third: Jazireh

Schedule of upcoming matches (all at Ahli court)			
Jazireh-Orthodoxi	Mon. 21/8	6 p.m.	
Ahli-Jazireh	Wed. 23/8	6 p.m.	
Ahli-Orthodoxi	Friday 25/8	6 p.m.	

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Paris St. Germain go top with away win

PARIS (R) — Paris St. Germain seized the lead from Bastia in the French Soccer League on Saturday with an impressive 3-1 win at newly-promoted Gueugnon.

A header by Panamanian striker Julio Cesar Dely Valdes after three minutes and two second-half efforts by Brazilian Rafi and Xavier Gravelaine allowed PSG to outclass Gueugnon, who snatched a goal back through Vincent Fomaz with one minute remaining.

The Paris club, fighting to recapture the title they lost to Nantes last May, were reduced to 10 men when Rafi was sent off in the 73rd minute for a vicious tackle on Gueugnon midfielder Franck Jurietti.

PSG are on 11 points with Guingamp, who beat Bordeaux 1-0 thanks to a first-half goal by Lionel Rouxel, and Metz, who were held to a goalless draw at Le Havre. Paris have a better goal difference.

Overnight leaders Bastia suffered their first defeat of the season with a 3-0 loss at St. Etienne, who recorded their first win with goals from Didier Thimotee, Slovakia's skipper Lubomir Moravcik and Liazid Sandjak.

Champions Nantes had to wait until the last minute to beat Nice 1-0 with Chadian Japhet N'Doram scoring from the penalty spot.

"We have quite a few players injured and I believe we can play much better than we did tonight," said Nantes trainer Jean-Claude Suaudeau, whose team are fifth two points behind Paris with a game in hand.

There was disappointment for Monaco, who were beaten 1-0 at home by Martigues with new signing Abdelmalek Sow of Guinea scoring the winner for the visitors in the 77th minute.

The team from the principality are a modest eighth, four points behind PSG after five games.

Bayern Munich rout Karlsruhe 6-2

BERLIN (AP) — Even without injured striker Juergen Klinsmann, Munich's new midfielders found enough targets to lead the team to a 6-2 rout Saturday over Karlsruhe in a Bundesliga match decided in the opening minutes.

Swiss Ciriaco Sforza and Austria's Andreas Herzog teamed up to riddle the defence with combination passing and set up one scoring chance after another.

That was exactly why Bayern Munich snatched them away from other Bundesliga clubs last season.

"Munich showed all its cleverness today," said Karlsruhe coach Winfried Schaefler. "Even winning by that big of a score was deserved."

Christian Ziege started the rout in the 14th minute. Oliver Kruezer landed a header four minutes later and Alexander Zickler put Munich up 3-0 in the 35th.

Adrian Knapp then scored the first of his two goals for Karlsruhe, but it was enough to slow down the blowout at home in front of 33,800.

Sforza's pass ignited a volley shot by Dietmar Hamann in the 57th minute, while

Mehmet Scholl's penalty shot and Zickler's second goal completed the scoring for Munich.

Munich had feared the loss of Klinsmann for four weeks due to a leg injury would derail the team's high hopes for the season. The team was also humiliated 7-0 by Deportivo La Coruna in a friendly this week.

But they shook off the setbacks and moved atop the first division standings with a 2-0 record. Their chief rival for the title, Dortmund, struggled to a 1-1 result against Leverkusen — its second straight draw.

Muenchengladbach moved into third place with an impressive 3-1 win over FC Kaiserslautern, a top club last season.

In other matches, Stuttgart and 1860 Munich drew 1-1; Uerdingen and Frankfurt finished their contest with the same score.

St. Pauli held second place after edging Freiburg 2-0 in Friday action, while Rostock beat Schalke 3-1 and Bremen and Hamburg fought to a 3-3 draw.

Dortmund, the defending

champions, struggled again despite the Bundesliga debut of Ruben Sosa of Uruguay. Sosa impressed his teammates but wasn't able to ignite Dortmund's offence.

After Leverkusen veteran Rudi Voeller scored on a solo run in the 57th minute, Andy Moeller forced the draw on a penalty shot seven minutes later.

Visiting Moenchengladbach got a lift from newcomer Michael Sternkopf as it beat Kaiserslautern. Sternkopf had languished on Munich's bench before escaping this year.

After Swedish international Martin Dahlin put Moenchengladbach up 1-0, Sternkopf and Peter Wynnhoft sealed the game with goals. Miroslav Kadlec scored the consolation goal.

Bulgaria's Krassimir Balakov shot an equaliser for Stuttgart in the 51st minute, helping the visitors recover from compatriot Daniel Borimirov's early goal for 1860 Munich.

Heiko Peschke's second half goal helped Uerdingen to a home draw after Slobodan Komljenovic had given Frankfurt the early lead.

Aston Villa crush Manchester United

LONDON (AFP) — Pressure on Alex Ferguson increased as Manchester United slipped to a 3-1 defeat away to Aston Villa on Saturday — their worst league loss for three years.

Ferguson let go Mark Hughes, Paul Ince, and possibly Andrei Kanchelskis during the summer, and many will blame that for their worst result since a 3-0 reverse to Everton in 1992.

Aston Villa were on fire in the first half with goals from former Sheffield Wednesday midfielder Ian Taylor, new signing Mark Draper, and a penalty from Trinidadian international Dwight Yorke after Serbian striker Savo Milosevic was brought down by Peter Schmeichel.

To add to United's problems England international Gary Pallister went off with a knee injury in the second half. But substitute David Beckham salvaged some re-

spect for United scoring from 25 yards with seven minutes to go.

Champions Blackburn Rovers held onto a slender 1-0 lead over Queens Park Rangers, though goalkeeper Tim Flowers was sent off in the 73rd minute for a professional foul on Trevor Sinclair.

A penalty from ace striker Alan Shearer in the fifth minute after he had been fouled by QPR defender David Bardsley was the difference.

A Matthew Le Tissier hat-trick for Southampton could not prevent them losing to Nottingham Forest 4-3 at the Dell.

Le Tissier hit two penalties and a 25 yard freekick, but a double from Dutchman Brian Roy and other goals from Colin Cooper and winger Ian Woan earned Nottingham Forest the win.

Leeds United came from behind to beat West Ham 2-1

thanks to two brilliant goals from Ghanaian Tony Yeboah. He scored with a header and a left foot volley both supplied by Gary Kelly.

West Ham's Danny Williamson, 21, had scored the first Premiership goal of the season after five minutes.

Wimbledon had to withstand a spirited comeback from Premiership newcomers Bolton Wanderers. Wimbledon went 2-0 up in 23 minutes through Nigerian international Efan Ekoku and Robbie Earle.

Bolton Wanderers were level by half time with a penalty by Alan Thompson after Mark Patterson was brought down by Alan Kimble.

And Dutchman Fabian De Freitas equalised with an angled shot that appeared to hit debutant goalkeeper Paul Heald but dribbled over the line.

Seles reaches Canadian Open final

TORONTO (AP) — Monica Seles continued to defy her own expectations to demolish sixth-seeded Gabriela Sabatini 6-1, 6-0 to reach the final of the Canadian Open.

The destruction was complete and took just 49 minutes Saturday as Seles displayed flawless tennis. Her serves, her returns, her placement of shots were all awesome.

It was the best she's been in this first tournament back after 2 months. She said before it began that it would be unrealistic for her to expect to reach the final. The way she played Saturday, it would have been foolish to expect otherwise.

She will meet Amanda Coetzer for the championship on Sunday. Coetzer defeated No. 4 Jana Novotna, 6-4, 6-3, her fourth straight seeded victim, in Saturday night's other semifinal.

"I played some great points," Seles said. "She kept mixing her shots up and I had to work on every point and do a lot of running."

From the start, Seles took charge. Every shot in her arsenal was working perfectly — slams, drop shots, passing shots. Sabatini could do nothing about it and she was suitably impressed with the way Seles had taken her apart.

"She was playing very well, making a lot of winners and not giving me a lot of opportunities. I don't think I played badly. She just played very, well, very close to the level she was at before."

"After two years, it's hard to just start playing tournaments again. She's playing like nothing hap-



Fans hold up a sign during Monica Seles' match against Gabriela Sabatini during their semifinal at the Canadian Open (AFP photo)

pened."

Seles has been brilliant all week, and nothing, not even a gimpy left knee, has interfered. She covered the net effortlessly against Sabatini and on a number of occasions raced from baseline to net to hit winners.

There was some thought that Sabatini might challenge Seles. She had won three of 12 previous matches against her, one of just five players to have beaten Seles more than once. Three of the others — Chris Evert, Martina Navratilova and Jennifer Capriati — are no longer playing.

Each player won her first service game at love. It was, however, the only time all day Sabatini was able to

handle Seles. After that, Seles' serves and returns were just two too much.

Typical was a point at 4-1 when Sabatini seemed to have beaten her on a long shot. Seles chased down the ball for a huge return, then dashed from the baseline to the net for a crosscourt winner. The crowd roared and Seles raised her arm and beamed. Even she seemed impressed.

A moment later, she broke Sabatini for a 5-1 lead. In the first set, which took just 23 minutes, Seles lost just four points on her serve. She benefited from a couple of close calls. Once, Sabatini quit on a shot she thought was out, and later she played on after another ball she thought had missed the line

was ruled good.

As well as Seles was playing, she hardly needed the help. "I felt bad about the calls," Seles said. "I didn't want the match to go that way. Gaby was very supportive of me. She was the only player in Rome to stand up for me after the stabbing, so there was a lot of emotion at the end of the match."

Seles said she continues to play with a new attitude and a new perspective about tennis.

"Win or lose, it's just great to be out there again," she said. "After all the dark days and dark spots, to play great tennis and have fun doing it, that's just great."

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Villagers pass by the wreckage of cars overturned in the flood that hit villages in the Marakkeh region of Morocco on Friday (AFP photo)

Morocco floods toll goes up

RABAT (R) — Morocco said on Sunday 141 people had died in flash floods that swept the southwestern region of Marrakesh and newspapers said whole families, many on holiday, were wiped out in the worst flooding in the region for 50 years.

An Interior Ministry statement said rescuers had plucked the bodies from five of the worst-hit regions of Al Haouz province south of the city of Marrakesh, 330 kilometres from Rabat.

Many victims were holidaymakers trapped in cars swept by rivers of mud that poured down the forested Atlas mountains, sending rocks hurtling onto camping sites and villages in the valleys below following a freak thunderstorm.

Television showed bodies of men, women and children caked in mud being carried off in ambulances.

The government newspaper Le Matin said 30,000 holidaymakers, many of them campers and backpackers, were in the area when the downpour began on Thursday night.

The campers were the most vulnerable, having chosen shaded terrain near rivers and streams which burst their banks.

The mainly rural area is a popular holiday resort for Moroccans escaping the intense heat of the cities, where temperatures have reached record highs in recent weeks.

There have been no reports that foreign tourists were among the casualties.

Some newspapers said hundreds more people were missing in remote mountain areas, but the Interior Ministry spokesman implied that rescuers did not expect to find more bodies after scouring the region for three days with help from the military.

Some residents contacted by telephone from Rabat said they had seen arms floating in the sludge that rolled down from the mountains.

The mudslides sent cars smashing into each other and television showed cars stacked up like toys.

The ministry statement said more than 100 homes and shops were destroyed.

King Hassan ordered emergency supplies sent. Interior Minister Driss Bassi visited on Friday to oversee the rescue and ordered a commission set up to help the rural area.



Survivors of the flood-ravaged village of Oualams in the Marakkeh region of Morocco leave the area to find refuge (AFP photo)

IAF hits joint exercises as part of 'American scheme'

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan's largest opposition party on Sunday condemned the joint Jordanian-American military exercises which began in the Kingdom's southern desert on Friday, urging the government "to keep the American forces away from our land and our people who were shocked when they saw the strategic ally of Israel" in Jordanian territories.

In a statement interspersed with the customary anti-American and anti-Israeli rhetoric, the Islamic Action Front (IAF) warned of a "grand American scheme" to control the region, its resources and its people.

The IAF said it opposed the military manoeuvres, which it described as a provocation to the Jordanian people, and urged the government not to repeat them.

The IAF said the exercises, in which about 3,000 American and 4,000 Jordanian troops are participating, are part of an American design aimed at "rearranging the region" at this critical juncture.

"It seems that the era of rearranging (the region) according to American designs have not been completed yet. Hence is the 'olstering of the American presence, especially the military one' in the area, the statement said.

The statement made a connection between the exercises and the announcement by a senior Iraqi official who defected to Jordan Aug. 8 that he will be working to topple the Iraqi regime.

"The arrival of the American forces could be the first priority action against Iraq," said the statement, adding that it might also aim at strengthening Israel in light of the difficulties it is facing in its negotiations with Syria.

The statement said that the increased presence of American troops in the region is intended to "bully" Arab countries with view to accelerating the peace process with Israel.

The United States beefed up its military presence in the region, following the defection of former Iraqi Minister of Industry Hussein Kamel Hassan Al Majid to Jordan.

In addition to moving the aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt to the Eastern Mediterranean, the U.S. said it was ready to deploy 20,000 troops in the area to guard against perceived Iraqi threats to Jordan and Kuwait after it detected "unusual" movement by the Iraqi army.

Iraq rejected as mere "hallucination" the American accusations. The United Nations confirmed that the Iraqi forces had made no unusual movement.

The joint military exercises, dubbed "Infinite Moonlight," were planned weeks before the defection of General Hassan to the Kingdom and the government stressed that they have no connection with the latest developments in Iraq.

But the IAF appeared to have brushed aside the government assurances, insisting that the manoeuvres are part of an American scheme to "terrorise the region and exploit its oil wealth."

(Continued on page 7)

Mufti: 'Fatwa' against selling land to Israelis is not binding

By Sae'da Kilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's mufti, Sae'ed Hijawi, Sunday described a fatwa by prominent clerics early this week that prohibits land sale to Israelis as an "individual interpretation" that could not become binding unless approved by the Ifta' Council, the highest religious authority in the Kingdom.

The fatwa, issued by religious scholars, university professors and Islamist parliamentarians who described themselves as "heirs to God's messengers," prohibits the sale or lease of land to Israelis and described those "who cede their lands (to the enemy) and recognise the state of the Jews" as "disloyal" and "should not be trusted."

"Fatwas could not be recognised officially and accepted religiously unless the Ifta' Council looks into them," Mufti Hijawi told the Jordan Times.

According to Mufti Hijawi, an old fatwa issued by the former mufti of Jordan, Sheikh Abdullah Kalkili, that bans all kinds of trade with Israel has so far not been revoked.

"But in light of new developments, the (council) could look into the issue," he said referring to the peace treaty with Israel and Parliament's abrogation of laws that ban dealing with Israelis.

He added that the Ifta' Council, which consists of "jurists and is headed by Chief Justice Izzeddine Tamimi, would be ready to study the new fatwa if the authorities requested it do so.

One reason behind issuing the new 'fatwa' at this time, according to one of its signatories, Islamist Deputy Hamman Sa'ed, was Parliament's ratification of the laws that ended the boycott of Israel.

Dr. Sa'ed told the Jordan Times that the signatories "thought the law did not offer enough guarantees against the sale of land to Israelis, especially to Israelis who hold double nationality."

The three-page fatwa warned of serious implications on the region as a whole if Arabs sold land to Israelis. The fatwa further warned of the spread of unethical practices like adultery "that will corrupt the new generations."

"Let it be a reminder to our beloved people in Jordan that the first step to the occupation of Palestine was through the purchase of Arab land by Jewish merchants who were not originally inhabitants of Palestine," the fatwa said. "The greed of the Jews did not end with the occupation of Palestine; they aspire to seize all the Arab region."

The Lower House of Parliament last month endorsed a law ending boycott of Israel but conditioned land sale to foreigners with reciprocal treatment from the buyer's country of origin.

The law, which was also endorsed by the Senate and awaits ratification by His Majesty King Hussein, allows land sale to foreigners under strict conditions and in limited areas in the Kingdom. Any sale or lease of land to foreigners necessitates the approval of the cabinet, according to the law.

"It is not enough," Dr. Sa'ed said. "The Jordanian-Israeli 'treaty,' which bans discriminatory practices in all Jordanian laws, supercedes all laws and makes land sale to Israelis very easy."

The Islamic Action Front deputy said the issuance of this fatwa was very important to remind people of the serious implications of selling land to foreigners, especially to Israelis.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Arab League urges members to pay arrears

CAIRO (AP) — The Arab League called on its member states Sunday to pay \$80 million in arrears so that it can carry out its duties and pay its 500 employees. For years, the 22-member league has faced a tight budget. Earlier this year, the employees at its headquarters in Cairo were paid their monthly salaries several weeks late. Iraq, Somalia, Mauritania, Djibouti and the Comoro Islands have not paid any fees because of a financial squeeze at home, officials said. Their share comes to 14 per cent of the league's budget. Countries which have not paid in full are Bahrain, Algeria, Jordan, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco and Yemen.

Gunmen wound Palestinian professor

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Unknown gunmen in the West Bank on Sunday wounded a Palestinian professor who has criticised PLO leader Yasser Arafat's peace moves with Israel, witnesses said. They said Abdul Sattar Al Qassem was shot four times in the West Bank city of Nablus. Hospital officials described his wounds as moderate. Palestinians said Dr. Qassem had criticised Mr. Arafat in opposition newspapers for his leadership style and his 1993 peace deal with Israel which launched Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho. Dr. Qassem's son said the gunman fled in a car with licence plates issued by the Palestinian self-rule authority.

Passengers force pilot to evict AIDS woman

CAIRO (AP) — Frightened passengers forced the pilot of an Egypt Air flight Sunday to leave behind an Ethiopian woman who was being thrown out of the country because she had the AIDS virus. Mariam Mashari, 25, was ordered deported after she tested positive for the virus. Once she boarded the flight to Ethiopia, some of the passengers found out, got frightened and forced the pilot to have her taken off the plane, airport officials said. Ms. Mashari was taken from the airport to a Cairo hospital. The flight later left for Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Egypt has around 560 AIDS cases and has deported 225 foreigners who tested positive for the AIDS virus. Despite health campaigns to teach Egyptians how the disease is transmitted, many shun any contact with AIDS patients, who are usually detained in hospitals. The airport officials said that Ms. Mashari was employed as a maid by an Egyptian actress, who demanded the woman undergo the tests.

Turkish police defuse bomb left at newspaper

ISTANBUL (R) — Police on Sunday defused a bomb found outside an Istanbul bureau of the conservative daily newspaper Turkiye, the Anatolian news agency said. It said the bomb was discovered after an anonymous phone call to police reporting a suspicious package at the newspaper's Baglilar office, which is closed on Sundays. Gunshots have been fired twice over the past nine months at the offices of two newspapers in Istanbul. In both cases there were no injuries and it remains unclear who was responsible. Last December three offices of the pro-Kurdish daily Ozgur Ulke — since closed by court order for separatism — were bombed and one person was killed.

Sudan wants ban on recruitment of refugees

KHARTOUM (AFP) — The Sudanese government has asked the U.N. to intervene and prevent the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army from recruiting Sudanese refugees into its ranks, newspaper reports said Sunday. The secretary general of the government-formed High Council for Peace, Lino Rol Deng, said his council told the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees that the army was recruiting young men among the refugees in neighbouring Kenya, Uganda and Eritrea, newspapers here reported. "Those SPLA (army) practices are regarded a violation of human rights and United Nations conventions providing for protection of refugees and banning their recruitment for military activities," Deng was quoted as saying. Deng, from southern Sudan, has also said his council has appealed to international non-governmental organisations to visit refugee camps in those nations to find facts on the matter. He said there were efforts by the Sudanese and Ugandan governments for repatriation of Sudanese refugees there. He did not specify the number of Sudanese refugees in neighbouring countries. Previous reports on Sudanese refugees in Uganda put the number at 150,000 and in Kenya 30,000.

Iranian deputy minister visits Kabul

KABUL (R) — Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister Alaaddin Borujerdi arrived in Kabul on Sunday to discuss bilateral ties and regional security, a senior Iranian diplomat said. Gholam Hadadi said Mr. Borujerdi would also talk about possible strategies for ending Afghanistan's civil war. "Our policy is to have continuous relations and contact with both the government and rival groups to find a comprehensive solution to the war here," the ambassador said. Afghanistan's acting minister of state for foreign affairs, Najibullah Lafrai, was at Kabul airport to welcome Mr. Borujerdi and his top military commander Ahmad Shah Masoud before leaving on Monday.

Opposition group demands role in Iran polls

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Liberation Movement of Iran (LMI), an illegal pro-democracy opposition group in Iran, called on the authorities on Sunday to allow it to take part in legislative elections next year. Several LMI leaders urged President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in a press conference to help remove "obstacles" in the way of the group's participation in the March elections. "We will participate in the coming elections provided the authorities publicly guarantee the safety of our activities and that of our followers before and after the (election) campaign," said Ibrahim Yazdi, the secretary general of the group, which is tolerated here. He demanded that people be allowed to "choose their candidates freely" to check growing apathy among the population in the country's political life. "Although participation in the elections would be difficult for us in the present state of affairs, the LMI has a right and national duty to take part," Mr. Yazdi said. He criticised extra powers granted by parliament to the Council of Guardians, a legislative body dominated by conservative clerics, to screen candidates ahead of the elections, saying they were "unconstitutional."

Tourabi: Sudan attacked for its Islamic rule

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's influential Islamist leader Hassan Al Tourabi said on Sunday his country was being unjustly criticised abroad because it applied Islamic laws and revived the concept of Jihad, or holy struggle.

He was quoted by the official Sudan News Agency (SUNA) as saying the change which Sudan has been witnessing since the implementation of Islamic laws would take it to the position of leadership in the world.

Dr. Tourabi said Sudan, after living through the first half of this century under Western domination, had revived the concept of Jihad, which he said had been forgotten in the Islamic World.

Western nations led by the United States, together with Egypt and several other Arab states have repeatedly accused Sudan, led since 1989 by the Islamist-backed government of Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, of giving refuge and training for Muslim militant groups. Sudan denies the charge.

Iran oil deal will not be changed -- Botha

CAPE TOWN (R) — South Africa will not bow to U.S. pressure over its new oil marketing joint venture with Iran, Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Piik Botha said on Sunday.

The United States should tackle Iran's alleged nuclear ambitions in the appropriate international agencies and not in talks with South Africa, he told Reuters.

"I will not reconsider the deal because I do not understand why the United States should be so concerned with our little bit of business with Iran," he said in an interview.

The U.S. State Department has expressed disappointment at the deal, approved in principle last week during a visit by Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati.

U.S. Energy Secretary Hazel O'Leary said when she began a week-long visit to South Africa on Saturday that she would raise the issue "in the appropriate arena."

Algerian politician accuses GIA of Paris blasts

PARIS (Agencies) — The leader of a pro-democracy Algerian party said Sunday he believed that Thursday's bomb attack near the Arc de Triomphe was the work of the ultra-radical Armed Islamic Group (GIA).

Said Saadi, leader of the Rally for Culture and Democracy (RCD), said: "There are reasons to suggest that the Armed Islamic Group carried out the last three attacks on French territory."

Thursday's bomb planted in a rubbish bin injured 17 people, mostly tourists, three of them seriously. The other attacks took place on July 25, when a powerful bomb exploded in a busy commuter train in the heart of Paris' Left Bank, killing seven and leaving more than 80 injured, and July 11, when an 85-year-old Algerian imam was gunned down in a Paris mosque.

In an interview with the Journal du Dimanche, Mr. Saadi said "recently, in Algeria, armed groups have used the same process of the gas cylinder in their attacks" as the two Paris subway attacks.

Reliable sources say both bombs used chlorate-based explosive packed into a camping-gas canister purchased in Belgium, and a battery-powered time delay fuse.

Mr. Saadi said a village in Kabylie, east of Algiers, was attacked several days ago and that "the only aim of the attackers was to take gas cylinders."

He told the newspaper that the GIA was carrying out attacks "to give the impression that it still exists politically, as it is in difficulty here (in Algeria)."

The shadowy GIA is considered the most radical of the Muslim extremist groups fighting to topple the military-backed government in Algiers.

COLUMN

Malaysian post card described as vulgar

KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — Indian women are reportedly angered by a Malaysian national day post card they consider vulgar because it shows a large span of an Indian woman's midriff. "This is definitely not the type of Indian culture that exists in Malaysia. It practically shows the woman semi-nude," said Vimala Nair, who heads the Malaysia Hindu Sangam women's wing. Hindu Sangam represents thousands of Hindus in Malaysia on religious, ethical and other matters, and is an official advisory group to the government. MS. Nair was quoted in a report by the Sunday Star newspaper. Hindu women here normally wear a sari, a six-yard cloth that covers the body almost entirely. But the woman in the postcard painting is without a sari and is shown wearing only underclothes, Ms. Nair was quoted as saying. She added that to depict Indian women in such a fashion on a national day card sends the wrong message, she said. Senior postal official Zubir Othman said the government did not design the cards, but contracted the work out. "We apologize if the card has offended anyone and there was no intention to belittle any race or depict them in the negative light," he said, adding they were investigating the matter. There are about 1.8 million Indians in Malaysia and most of them are Hindus. National or independence day is Aug.

China cleans up massage parlours

BEIJING (AFP) — Beijing police have launched a clean up operation to shut down massage parlours and bars frequented by prostitutes ahead of the upcoming Fourth World Conference on Women. Some 50 women were arrested in a police sweep Friday on a single strip of hairdressing-massage outlets next to the five-star Kunlun Hotel, witnesses said Sunday. "All the girls have been taken away, and the ones from outside Beijing have been forced to return to their hometowns," said the owner of a nearby store.

Christians, Muslims burn condoms

NAIROBI (AFP) — Christian and Muslim clergymen in Kenya set fire to sex education books, condoms and other contraceptives to demonstrate their opposition to government plans to introduce sex lessons in schools, local newspapers reported Sunday.